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THE TEMPLE

AND OTHER POEMS

THE TEMPLE

AND OTHER POEMS

Translated by

ARTHUR WALEY

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY ON EARLY CHINESE POETRY, AND AN APPENDIX ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIFFERENT METRICAL FORMS

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE *ODES*—THE LAND OF CH'U—CH'Ü YÜAN AND SUNG YÜ

In *170 Chinese Poems* I said little about the kind of poem which is called *fu*, and what I did say stands in need of correction. I shall here first give a short account of the earliest Chinese poetry, and then an account of the *fu*.

The Odes.

The *Book of Odes* is a collection of 312 songs, chosen and arranged by Confucius in the fifth century. The earliest seems to date from about 1753 B.C.; the latest belongs to about 600 B.C. Many of them are folk-songs of the most primitive type:

We are gathering the plantain,
We pluck but little;
We are gathering the plantain,
We find but little.
We are gathering the plantain,
We have plucked a few spikes.
We are gathering the plantain,
We have pressed out a few grains.
We are gathering the plantain,
We have put a little in our aprons.
We are gathering the plantain,
We have tucked in our aprons at the belt.

This is a mere action-song. The words have no significance apart from the movements which inspired them and the tunes to which they were sung. There are also love-songs, soldiers' songs, eulogies of kings and queens, and festival songs. Many of them make a great use of refrain, so that each verse only differs from the last by the alteration of a few words.

The beauty of the *Odes* is almost entirely musical. It is impossible to read them to oneself, even in the most barbarous and Occidental pronunciation, without one's senses being invaded by the freshest and most delightful tunes. In translation all this is lost, and what remains may be interesting as anthropology, history or mythology, but it has little value as literature.

In China folk-songs were collected for political purposes. They were regarded as a means by which the governing classes could get into touch with the common people, could discover their grievances and aspirations. The followers of Confucius interpreted the *Odes* entirely as politico-ethical documents. The love-songs were all explained as referring to the relation between the Minister of State and his Prince. This led to an interpretation as odd as the ecclesiastical gloss upon the *Song of Solomon*.

Most European translators of the *Odes*, being unfamiliar with the very similar folk-songs of other countries, have been content to accept the Confucian interpretation or have at any rate thought it worth while to expound it. Recently M. Marcel Granet, approaching the *Odes* as a student of comparative folk-lore, has recognized their true character and, incidentally, furnished some of the best translations that have been made.[1]

[1] *Fêtes et Chansons anciennes de la Chine*, 1919.

The only other poems of this period which survive are inscribed upon a set of "stone drums," supposed to date from about 900 B.C., and now preserved in the Confucian College at Peking:

Our chariots were strong,
Our teams well-matched.
Our chariots were beautiful,
Our horses were swift.
Many were the princes
That pressed upon the prey,
Chasing, ever chasing,
In rings round the field.
Stags and does swiftly
Fled from our galloping,
But we followed after
With bows hard bent,
Bows bent in our hands. . . .

After 600 B.C. comes a gap of three hundred years in our knowledge of Chinese poetry. During this period the power of the central government was rapidly declining, and the practice of obtaining political information through official "song-collectors" (*tsai shih kuan*) seems to have been suspended. Literary poetry (as opposed to song-words) did not yet exist, and the anthology of Confucius during the whole period enjoyed a prestige which defied competition. "Poetry" at this time meant the Confucian *Odes*.

A few short songs survive, scattered about the works of historians and philosophers. Moreover, rhyme was sometimes used as an ornament to prose—frequently, for example, by the Taoist philosopher, Chuang Tzŭ—but without that definite pattern of rhythm which distinguishes verse from prose. Lao Tzŭ, the predecessor of Chuang Tzŭ, uses a kind of rude, mnemonic doggerel.

Literary Poetry.

Poetry as an art separate from music arose not in the ancient domain of China ruled by the Chou dynasty, but in an outside and semi-foreign state, the Land of Ch'u.

The early Chinese inhabited the basin of the Yellow River. The basin of the Yang-tze was still in the hands of "Jungle Barbarians," whose country was known from the seventh century B.C onwards as Ch'u, "The Land of Thorns." These people were not wholly different from the Chinese either in speech or race; the relation may be compared with that of Rome to the Italic tribes. Their descendants still inhabit the wilder districts of Hunan, Ssechuan and Yünnan.

The Land of Ch'u was colonized by the Chinese at least as early as 1000 B.C. It was ruled by kings who claimed kinship with the Chinese imperial family. In 334 B.C. the King of Ch'u conquered Yüeh, a non-Chinese state which lay near the mouth of the Yang-tze, and expanded his frontiers till they included parts of the modern provinces of Kiangsi, Fuhkien, Kuang-tung, Honan and Shēnsi. For a few decades Ch'u was the most important state in the Far East.

The conqueror of Yüeh was Wei Wang, who ruled from 339 to 329 B.C. His son Huai Wang (329–299) attempted to continue his father's policy of expansion, but was defeated by the King of Ch'in at the battle of Hankow in 313 B.C. Henceforward the fortunes of Ch'u steadily declined.

Ch'ü Yüan, Minister to Huai Wang, was born in 332 B.C. He was related to the royal family of Ch'u and held during the early part of his life a succession of high appointments at court. He opposed Huai Wang's schemes of military adventure, but without

effect; and in 303, partly owing to the intrigues of his fellow-ministers, he was banished from the court.

After wandering for six years about the wild country south of the Yang-tze, he committed suicide in 296 by throwing himself into the Milo River.

During his exile Ch'ü Yüan wrote a long poem of a very strange description. This was the *Li Sao*, or "Falling into Trouble." It is what we may call a politico-erotic ode. After boasting of his descent from the mythical Emperors of China, and complacently recording his own rectitude and nobility of character, he begins to speak of his relations with Huai Wang in a love-allegory. The King who would not listen to his counsels becomes a faithless lover:

At yellow dusk we were to meet.
Alas, halfway you came, and turned aside.
Time was when all your thoughts were shared with me,
But now your heart is changed,
You hide from me and others steal my place.

Later in the poem his mind travels through the realms of Heaven. He sees in vision the Hanging Orchard, the Thunder God, the Wind God, the Sun Gods. . . .

Suddenly I looked back and tears flowed,
For I was sad that no woman was with me on these high hills.

So he sends the God of the Wind to look for the Shēn-nü or "Holy Lady," a favourite goddess of the land of Ch'u. But difficulties arose. The goddess "had no regard for propriety"; "therefore I abandoned her and sought elsewhere." Looking upwards he saw Chienti, the King of Yusung's lovely daughter,[1] sitting

[1] One day when she and her sisters were bathing, a swallow passed overhead and dropped a brightly coloured egg among them. Chienti put it in her mouth and by accident swallowed it. She became pregnant and bore Chieh the Tyrant.

on her Green Jade Tower. She was beautiful, but she was wicked; moreover, she was already the concubine of the Emperor K'u.[1]

Abandoning his project of marriage, Ch'ü Yüan betakes himself to the legendary sorcerer Wu Hsien, whom he presents with "pepper and the finest rice." Wu Hsien advises him to seek for a prince whose principles consort with his own. Accordingly, Ch'ü Yüan sets out on a fresh mental excursion, this time across the Gobi Desert and towards the Caspian Sea.

But nowhere does he find any comfort.

> All is over!
> There is no good man in all the land,
> Not one that knows me!

It is a strange poem, cryptic and incoherent, yet of a triumphant vehemence and flow. The commentators of the usual edition are at pains to explain the allegory throughout. Since Legge has translated the commentary rather than the text, he has to some extent effaced the erotic character of the poem.

What renders it impossible to translate at all readably is the frequency of mythological and topographical allusions. To annotate all these would involve a tedious number of footnotes, and to leave them unexplained would make the poem unintelligible.

The Metrical Form of the *Fu*.

The *Li Sao*, together with the later imitations of it and some other kindred pieces, are known as the *Ch'u T'zŭ* or "Elegies of Ch'u." At the time when they were written (and long after), all these poems were known as *fu*, which was the name given to literary poetry

[1] 2436 B.C.

as opposed to song-words, or *libretti*. Like all forms of poetry, the *fu* originated in music and dance. In the *Great Summons* the ladies, in groups of eight, dance to the recitation of *fu* and songs. But from a quite early date the distinguishing mark of the *fu* was that it was recited and not sung.

The *fu* is commonly (though not always) prefaced by a short passage in prose describing the circumstances under which it was written. Such prefaces are not confined to the *fu*; but whereas in the case of "regular" poems the preface is wholly in prose, in the case of the *fu* the preface as it were soars into verse towards its close.

The *fu* itself begins very generally with some demonstrative exclamation, which stands outside the metre and corresponds, if you will, to the premonitory tap of the conductor's bâton. The lines of the *fu* are not of equal length throughout the poem, but this does not mean, as some writers have suggested, that there is no fixed rhythm. First comes, perhaps, a passage of five-beat lines; then one of four-beat lines. Other varieties may follow, but in each case the rhythm will be sustained sufficiently long to build up a coherent paragraph of verse.

In lines longer than four beats there is a very strong cæsura, marked by the insertion of a character which expresses the sound of a sigh. This syllable simply indicates a pause and in-taking of breath. That it is no intrinsic part of the poem is shown by the fact that some texts omit it. A similar part is played by the lightly stressed conjunctions, prepositions and enclitics [1]

[1] These were much more freely used in the north than in the south. See *Yen Shih Chia Hsün*, ch. xvii. This book is a miscellany composed by Yen Chih-t'ui (A.D. 531–595) for the use of his descendants.

(the Chinese call them "empty words") which the *fu* admits, but which other Chinese poetry excludes. These only occur at the cæsura:

Shih ts'ao yeh, *ĕrh* pu pao
Ate grass leaves, but not full

(i.e. I ate grass and leaves, but was not satisfied). I call the above a line of five beats, because the italicized word is unstressed, "empty" as the Chinese say. It will be seen that in such lines the cæsura comes after the third beat. In lines of six beats, it comes after the fourth, e.g.:

Yü tsung Ling-fēn *chih* chi chan.
Want follow Ling-fēn's auspicious oracle.

In general the even lines rhyme, but sometimes rhymed couplets or even triplets occur. There was, until the creation of the New *fu* under the T'ang dynasty, no conscious and deliberate tone-pattern.[1]

What I have said above must be taken only as a rough and generalized statement. Many *fu* (particularly the *Li Sao* and the poems written in imitation of it) are much more irregular in form. On the other hand, many *fu* of the Han, Wei and Chin dynasties (200 B.C.–A.D. 400) are absolutely regular in metre. For example, the *Wangsun Fu*, translated on page 88, is in five-beat lines throughout.

Origins of the *Fu*.

Though at any rate in the Han dynasty the *fu* was used for almost every kind of poetic purpose—lyrical, narrative, reflective and satirical—yet it is, I think,

[1] For the meaning of this term, see Appendix I, p. 140.

true to say that at all periods it tends to show one characteristic intimately connected with its origins : the *fu* was originally a spell.

In its purely magical form it is derived from the hymns by the recitation of which the priests of Ch'u compelled the gods to descend from Heaven and manifest themselves to their worshippers. Of this nature are the *Nine Hymns* of Ch'ü Yüan, which are *fu* in miniature. In its second form it is an incantation addressed to an earthly god, the King, whom the poet (not by argument nor even by rhetoric, but by a purely sensuous intoxication of rhythm and language) entices to a particular act of worship. The typical example of this kind of *fu* is the *Kao T'ang*, in which Sung Yü strives to persuade Prince Hsiang to revive the rituals of the Kao T'ang Shrine. Again, by the same exploitation of word-magic, the poet sought to influence the decisions of his sovereign in purely secular affairs.

Such, for example, is the origin of that long series of early *fu* in which the splendours of various great cities are described. The Early Han dynasty had had its capital at Ch'ang-an, in the north-west. The Latter Han capital was at Lo-yang, in the centre of China. In the reign of the Emperor Ho of the Latter Han dynasty, an attempt was made by influential citizens of Ch'ang-an to get the court moved back from Lo-yang to Ch'ang-an. The historian and poet Pan Ku, who had no desire to migrate to the west, accordingly wrote his famous *fu*, *The Two Capitals*, in which, after a Stranger from the West has described the wonders of Ch'ang-an, its temples, palaces, zoological gardens and aviary, an enthusiastic resident of Lo-yang bursts into a eulogy of the capital so eloquent that the Stranger

from the West slinks away abashed before the resident of Lo-yang has finished speaking. He is, however, unable to escape before the resident has thrust upon him a tract consisting of five odes upon the wonders of the capital.

It was from such works as this that the *fu* derived its preoccupation with outlandish things—exotic plants, rare animals, parrots, peacocks, humming-birds, unicorns, giraffes, and the like. But the writers who merely described an aviary or its individual inhabitants had no longer a political motive such as had actuated Pan Ku. The *fu* became purely lyrical, as, for example, in Wang I's *Ode to the Lychee*. Lastly, the *fu* certainly borrowed something from the rhetoric of the sophists.

The people to whom this name is commonly given were ambulant political experts who were willing to give advice to any prince who would remunerate them. Their arguments were generally of a rhetorical nature, that is to say, they were addressed to the imagination rather than to the intellect. A book called the *San Kuo Tsē*[1] records the harangues of these peripatetic economists and strategists. Sometimes they actually use the *fu* form; frequently they make a very close approach to it.[2]

Other Poems of Ch'ü Yüan.

1. I have already mentioned his *Nine Hymns*. These are versions of the hymns used by the wild country-

[1] Part of it has been translated into German by Dr. Franz Hübotter. Berlin, 1912.

[2] The five *fu* by the moralist Hsün Tzŭ (*circa* 250 B.C.) are verse of a sort, but certainly not poetry.

people among whom he lived during his exile. I will make a few extracts from them :

HYMN I.

To the Great Unity who is Sovereign of the East.

Flutes and cithers fling forth their melody,
The wizard lilts and lurches in his dazzling dress.
The scent of sweet herbs rises, fills the room.
Loud swells the music in manifold harmonies. . . .
Look, our Lord smiles down upon us and is content,
Our music has made him glad.

HYMN III.

To the God of the River.

For our sakes that ride in boats of sandal-wood,
Oh make the Yüan and Hsiang to have no wave.
Oh cause the waters of the River to flow quietly. . . .
We look for you, O Lord, but you do not come.
For whose sake, think you, but yours are we blowing at our flutes ?

HYMN IV.

The Ladies of the River Hsiang.

(Two princesses who threw themselves into the river and became its tutelary divinities.)

I will build my house in the water,
I will thatch it with a lotus roof.
The walls shall be hung with iris,
The steps shall be of purple shell.
All the air of its rooms
Shall be scented and sweetened
With leaves of the spice-tree. . . .

HYMN V.

To the God of Fate.

Wide back are flung
The gates of Heaven.
Forth into the world he rides
Upon a dusky cloud.

The whirling winds
Troop meekly before him;
The rainstorm at his bidding
Lays the dust where he will pass. . . .
Down he swoops upon his flight,
Over the Hill of the Hollow Tree,
Onward from the lands of Ju:
"Many are the provinces, many the peoples
That cover the wide earth.
There is no man among them all
Whose life hangs not on my hand."

There are two supplementary hymns, one "To those that died in Battle," which I translated at the beginning of *170 Chinese Poems*; another which forms a kind of *missa est* to the whole sequence.

2. The Heavenly Questionings.

This piece consists of a series of historical, cosmological and mythological conundrums, such as "Who parted Light from Darkness?", "How came a virgin to bear nine children?", "Where is the forest of stone trees in which the animals can all talk?"

How this document, which is evidently some kind of examination-paper, got mixed up with Ch'ü Yüan's literary works we do not know. It is written in a sort of rough doggerel; where the lines do not rhyme, the sequence of the text has probably become confused. Taken together with the commentary written during the Han dynasty it forms an invaluable corpus of early mythology. Here are two dragon-myths: There is a country where the sun does not shine; it is lit by a dragon who holds a huge candle. . . . The River God, in order to amuse himself without constraint,

assumed the form of a white dragon. The archer Hou Yi shot at him and wounded him in the left eye. The River God complained to the God of the Sky, saying: "Hou Yi must be punished; he has blinded my left eye." But the God of the Sky answered: "Hou Yi is not to blame. If a god stoops so low as to assume the semblance of a beast, he must brave the hunter's bow."

The current explanations of the Questionings are not satisfactory; perhaps Professor Conrady will suggest a better solution in his forthcoming work on this subject. In this poem and in other works of Ch'ü Yüan, Conrady has found traces of Indian influence.[1] The parallels which he cites are of the vaguest description; it is hard, for example, to see why Hymn 136 in the tenth book of the Rigveda reminds him of Ch'ü Yüan. The most striking coincidence to which he calls attention is Ch'ü Yüan's reference (in the *Heavenly Questionings*) to the Hare in the Moon. The Indians also believed in the "Hare in Moon," and Indian literature contains many references to it, though probably none that could be proved to be earlier than Ch'ü Yüan's poem. But when we find peoples so widely separated as the Mexicans and Hottentots also sharing this belief, the coincidence becomes less impressive.[2]

The luxuriant, "tropical" character of Ch'u literature, which Conrady attributes to Indian influence, is probably due rather to a resemblance of *terrain* between these two jungle civilizations.

[1] "Indischer Einfluss in China in 4 Jahr. v. Chr." (*Zeitschrift d. Deut. Morgenl. Gesellsch.*, Bd. 60).

[2] For an explanation of the wide prevalence of such myths, see the works of Elliot Smith and W. J. Perry.

3. The Nine Declarations.

These are in the same vein as the *Li Sao*. In a state of ecstatic vision he sees the elemental forces of nature at their source:

I see the stronghold where fiery heat is kept,
I look upon the place where the drizzling mists are stored.
I watch the hoar-frost and the snow-storm leave their home;
I listen to the boisterous crashing of the tides.

4. The Distant Wandering.

This poem is an expansion of certain parts of the *Li Sao*. It describes the poet's visionary wanderings through the Cosmos. He visits the lands "where the people have wings and do not die," bathes his hair in the seething pools of Sunrise, basks "in the fiery sunshine of the Southern Land where the cassia-tree blooms all year long," passes over hills where no beast roams, over plains where no man dwells. At last, clinging to a passing cloud, he reaches the great gates of Heaven, beholds the Emperor of Heaven's Serene Abode, and finally, united with *tao*, the World-spirit, he becomes "a neighbour of the Great Primeval One." [1]

5. Consulting the Soothsayer.

After he had been exiled for three years Ch'ü Yüan consulted a soothsayer. What policy ought he to pursue? "Should he become a farmer, should he make favour with the great, should he lisp and smile to please women, or should he maintain an attitude of unabated severity?"

[1] A treatise on this poem is about to be published in Germany, by P. Biallas.

The soothsayer (like the doctor in *The Wings of the Dove*) replied: "Do exactly as you like," adding, "This is not a case in which my art can be of any assistance to you."

6. The only other work unanimously ascribed to Ch'ü Yüan is the short prose *Dialogue with a Fisherman*. It is translated by Giles in his *History of Chinese Literature*.

7. The Great Summons.[1]

Of this poem Wang I, the editor of the *Elegies of Ch'u*, wrote *circa* A.D. 120: "*The Great Summons* is by Ch'ü Yüan; or as some will have it, by Ching Ch'ai."

This Ching Ch'ai was a younger contemporary of Ch'ü Yüan's. Apart from some sentences[2] quoted by Sung Yü, none of his work survives, nor is he mentioned in a list of early *fu*-writers which was made in 6 B.C.[3] This list, however, ascribes twenty-five pieces to Ch'ü Yüan, and the current collection of Ch'ü's works contains exactly twenty-five pieces, not counting the *Great Summons*. The maker of the list would therefore seem to ascribe this piece (which was certainly in existence at his time) neither to Ch'ü Yüan nor to Ching Ch'ai.

Sung Yü (born *circa* 320, died *circa* 260).

Sung Yü is said to have been a nephew of Ch'ü Yüan. He also held high office at the court of Ch'u. In 298

[1] Translated by me in *More Translations*. Allen & Unwin, 1919. Also by E. Erkes, *Asia Major*. Vol. i., p. 67 (1923).

[2] See p. 27.

[3] See *History of the Han Dynasty*, ch. xxx. However, the same list ascribes only sixteen pieces to Sung Yü and we possess eighteen.

Huai Wang, the monarch whom Ch'ü Yüan had admonished in vain, fell into the hands of the Ch'in and was held as a prisoner. His son Hsiang Wang reigned in his stead. His ascent to the throne was soon followed by the fall of Ying, the ancient capital of Ch'u, and complete capitulation to the Ch'ins in 278. Of Sung Yü's life we know nothing beyond what we can gather from his eighteen surviving poems.

1. The Summons to the Soul.[1]

This is another version of the *Great Summons*. It is not possible to prove in what relation the two poems stand to one another. To me the *Great Summons* seems to be by far the finer poem, but I do not feel convinced that it is earlier than the other.

2–10. The Nine Changes.

A sequence of nine poems in the vein of the *Li Sao*. The first two are particularly beautiful, but with a purely lyric beauty which defies translation. The first few lines of the first poem run somewhat as follows:

Sad, oh saddest
Of all seasons brings
Cold Autumn's breath.
How the sick wind sighs,
The forests quake and crash!
Earth goes to her doom.
Behold, a traveller on distant ways
Trudges frail with foreboding
Of destruction and decay
High, high on to the hill-top
And gazes down upon the deep.

[1] Translated by E. Erkes. Leipzig, 1914.

II. Sung Yü's Defence.

Once during the reign of Prince Hsiang, when Sung Yü had gone home on leave, T'ang Lo slandered him to the Prince, saying: "Sung Yü has an elegant figure and a great stock of little wit. Often when he is devoting himself to your Highness's service, he has but a moment before been embracing your Highness's daughter. Your Highness must not trust him."

When Sung Yü came back from his holiday the Prince said to him: "You have an elegant figure and a great stock of little wit. Often when you are devoting yourself to my service, you have but a moment before been embracing my daughter. Is not that a poor way to return my kindness?"

Then Sung Yü answered: "As for my elegant figure, I inherited it from my parents; as for my tongue, wise men taught me to use it well. But as for embracing your Highness's daughter—never have I done it.

"Once when I had been on a journey and came back with tired horses, hungry groom, I reached the Palace gate just as your Highness was opening it. Your porter was away and your housekeeper had gone to the market. Only your daughter was at home. She tried to find somewhere to put me. She said that in the gallery one was too high up, and in the parlour one was too low down. So we moved to the harem and there she left me. A lute was lying in the room, so I picked it up and began to play 'The Hidden Pansy' and 'White Snow.'

"Suddenly your Highness's daughter, clothed in a shimmering dress, carrying a turquoise-coloured, billowy rug, wearing a single petticoat of white floss, dangling bright ear-rings, with nodding pendants in her hair, came to

the door and knocked, crying: 'Are you not hungry, my Lord? I have cooked you a dish of humi and boiled you a soup of dewy mallows. I beg that you will eat them.' Then with a halcyon-hairpin she toyed with my cap-strings, but I dared not lift my head and look.

"And she began to sing:

The year is dying, dying,
The winter days grow chill.
My heart beats all a-tumble;
Dear love, let's talk no more.

"Then I took my lute and played 'Snow on the Autumn Bamboos.' But your daughter sang to me yet again:

Full of torment, full of dread
Walked I to my lover's bed,
And laid me down by his side.
For if my dear one says me No,
Not sullen to have been denied
This day to Death's dark land I go.

"'Lady,' I answered her, 'I would sooner slay a man's father and make him an orphan than take any freedom with the daughter of a king.'"

Then the King cried out: "Enough, enough! This time you shall not be dismissed."

The following two numbers, *Big Words* and *Little Words*, are explained by the preface which precedes them:—

12. Big Words.

Once when Hsiang, King of Ch'u, was sitting with T'ang Lo, Ching Ch'ai and Sung Yü on the Spring Cloud Terrace, the King said: "Is there any one who will make big

words for me?" Then Sung Yü, who was sitting at the head, cleared his throat and cried:

I seize the sword T'ai-o
And hack the universe to shreds,
Till the Heavens are so chocked with blood
That my chariot can soar no higher.

Next it was T'ang Lo's turn, and he said:

A hero's rage so mighty
That it can transcend the limits of the globe,
Soar to the Pole-star
Or make Mount T'ai into a plain.

[Ching Ch'ai then describes a monster with a tongue so huge that it can lick the whole world. Sung Yü wins with a verse ending: "I clutch the earth and kick the sky; there is not room for me to raise my head and look."]

13. Little Words.

The King offers the field of Yün-mēng for the best "little words."

T'ang Lo: "My chariot is carved out of a speck of dust; my boat is hollowed out of a grain of rice. Launched in the tranquil waters of a cup, I seem to toss upon the floods of a mighty sea. . . ."

Finally, Sung Yü describes: "An atom secretly nurtured in the heart of the indivisible. . . . Search for it and you will see nothing but darkness. Even the clear sight of Li Chu was baffled by it; he stared, but could not discern it." Sung Yü got the field at Yün-mēng.

14. Master Tēng-t'u.

Part of this *fu*, similar in theme to *Sung Yü's Defence*, I translated in *170 Chinese Poems*.

15. The Wind.

This, the most beautiful of all the early *fu*, I translated into prose in the *170*.

16. Kao T'ang.

Translated on page 65 of this book. It is interesting to compare its unwieldy exuberance with the rigid classicism of Po Chü-i's *Temple*. But it must be remembered that its text may have been transmitted orally and suffered considerable dislocation.

17. The Goddess (a sequel to Kao T'ang).

"One day when the King of Ch'u was walking by the shores of Yün-mēng, Sung Yü made at his request a poem about the legend of Kao-t'ang. That night the King dreamt that the goddess of Witches' Hill came to visit him."

Next day the King told his dream to Sung Yü and bade him make another *fu*; "and Sung Yü answered, 'Readily I will.'"

The *Goddess* is simply a catalogue of *bijouterie* and physical attractions. A translation of it would be wearisome and could not hope to give any conception of Sung Yü's magnificent eloquence.

18. The Flute.

On the slopes of Mount Hēng the poet finds a magic bamboo-clump. The legendary musician Master K'uang happened also to be passing that way. He orders his attendants to cut some stems of bamboo. . . . The legendary and miraculous carpenters Wang Erh and Kung-shu, with their apprentices, set to work and

fashion a marvellous flute. Then a girl with plaited locks takes the flute, bends her head, swoops with jade fingers over the stops, thrusts out her red lips. . . .

The text is fragmentary, disjointed and sometimes unintelligible. It was probably patched together from quotations preserved in different books.

There is an allusion to the attempted assassination of the First Emperor in 227 B.C. If this is not a mere interpolation, the poem cannot be by Sung Yü, who died at least thirty years before this event.

CHAPTER II

THE CH'IN EMPIRE—THE HAN PRINCES—TSOU YANG, MEI SHĒNG, SSŬ-MA HSIANG-JU

I HAVE said that during the lifetime of Sung Yü a new power arose in the north-west, and drove the Ch'us from their capital. This power was the state of Ch'in, a wild and bellicose people, whose blood was much mingled with that of the Tartar tribes on whose borders they lived. By 221 B.C. the whole of China, not the small feudal China over which the Chou kings had ruled but a vast imperial China which included the semi-Chinese states of the Yang-tze basin and sea-board, had fallen into their hands. The King of Ch'in became First Emperor ("Shih Huang-ti") of a realm almost as great in extent as that over which Alexander had a hundred years before held such brief sway. Determined not to lose, as Macedon so rapidly had done, the fruits of his conquest, the First Emperor devised a scheme which should hold both vassals and enemies in perpetual impotence. To render his empire impervious to foreign attack he began to encircle it with a huge wall, the Great Wall of China, which many centuries later was still incomplete. Every instrument of warfare throughout China was to be surrendered to him, and all this vast mass of metal smelted into the form of two huge

statues of iron. He would not be pestered with the precedents of a legendary past. He knew that his vast empire could not be handled as the paragons of ancient times had handled their small feudal kingdoms. He therefore proscribed the Confucians, whose wisdom consisted in perpetual adulation of the past, and burnt all written records (213 B.C.). The object of the Burning of the Books was probably the extinction of local patriotism. We know that in feudal times each state kept its own annals. None of these annals, except Confucius's history of the state of Lu, survives to-day. There is no reason to suppose that any pure literature perished in the Burning. Poetry, apart from folk-song, seems to have existed only in the state of Ch'u. Much heterodox (that is to say, non-Confucian) philosophy has certainly disappeared. But this was chiefly due to the indifference or hostility of Han dynasty scholars.

Of the poetry written during this reign no specimen survives ; but the list to which I referred above mentions four songs by a certain Master Huang and nine " miscellaneous *fu*."

The Ch'in dynasty lasted only eighty years. The First Emperor, having carried out with apparent success his grandiose scheme of permanent and inviolable empire, discovered that it was marred by one flaw : he himself was mortal. But surely the Emperor who had defeated and disarmed the millions of China, who had girt its vast confines with unassailable ramparts, could frustrate so small a thing as death ? He sent out wizards to search in remote islands for the " herb of immortality." After many failures they at last returned in triumph. He ate what they had brought,

fell ill and died. Soon afterwards the empire of the Ch'ins collapsed.

The First Emperor had dethroned the feudal princes and set up a rigidly centralized government.

The Princes.

The Han dynasty, which followed the Ch'in, saw a reversal of this policy. The empire was divided into a number of princedoms which were allotted to the sons and brothers of the new Emperor. Several of these princes were men of high culture, patrons of learning and literature. Four of them in particular concern us:

1. The Prince of Ch'u was a younger brother of the founder of the dynasty. He had studied the Confucian *Odes* in Lu (Shantung, Confucius's own province) under Fou-ch'iu Po, who was himself a pupil of the famous philosopher Hsün Tzŭ. When he ascended the throne, he established several of his fellow-pupils as officers of his court. Between them they produced an edition of the *Book of Odes*; it was known as the *Lu Odes*. He reigned from 206 to 184 B.C.

2. The Prince of Huai-nan, grandson of the founder of the dynasty, was "fond of music and books; he took no pleasure in hunting or dogs and horses." The Emperor Wu,[1] conscious of his cousin's fastidious taste, used to get his letters to Huai-nan written for him by the poet Ssŭ-ma Hsiang-ju. Once when the Prince was at the capital, the Emperor asked him at dawn to punctuate a copy of the *Elegies of Ch'u*, the text of which was still in a very confused state. "At breakfast time it was ready."

[1] Reigned 140–87 B.C.

The father of this Prince delighted in the fanciful speculations of the Taoists and constantly discussed with them such subjects as cosmogony, astronomy, alchemy, mythology and geography.[1] The book which we know as *Huai-nan Tzŭ* was composed by the son, and is in the main a record of these conversations.

3. Very different was the atmosphere at the court of Hsien, Prince of Ho-chien. He was a son of the Emperor Ching and inherited the throne of Ho-chien in 164 B.C. The aim of his life was to repair the damage done to scholarship by the Burning of the Books. He gave large rewards for the discovery of old texts, and soon possessed a library as large as that of the Emperor.

"At this time the Prince of Huai-nan also loved learning and invited the possessors of books to bring them for inspection. But most of those he secured were of a trivial character compared with the books collected by the Prince of Ho-chien, whose texts were all in the ancient character and dated before the Burning. Annotated editions were thus made of the *Chou Kuan, Shang-shu Li* and *Li Chi* (books of ritual), and of Mencius and Lao Tzŭ, with the commentaries of the 70 disciples of Confucius. . . ."

He died in 139 B.C.

4. But the prince who concerns us most is Hsiao, Prince of Liang, second son of the Emperor Wēn. From 178 till 144 B.C. he ruled over the richest and most populous division of the empire, an area containing forty walled cities. Disappointed in his hope of becoming Heir Apparent to the Emperor, he applied for

[1] Which remained a branch of mythology until the explorations of Chang Ch'ien, *circa* 138–115 B.C.

leave at least to be allowed to live at the capital instead of at his own provincial court. This was refused, and he consoled himself at Liang by making his place of exile the literary capital of the empire. Of the many poets who frequented his palace three are still famous:

1. Tsou Yang.

He was born about 200 B.C., and early in life entered the service of the Prince of Wu. He found that this prince was plotting to revolt, and moved to the court of Liang. The Prince of Liang cast him into prison, where he wrote a famous apologia, preserved by the historian Ssŭ-ma Ch'ien, who remarks: "Though Tsou Yang writes defiantly, yet by a series of skilful analogies and comparisons he contrives to arouse our sympathies. He protests with vigour, yet does not flinch from his punishment. That is why I have included this notice of him in my biographies."

Besides *Wine*, which I have translated in this book, only one poem, the *Stool*, survives. It celebrates the making of a stool for the Prince of Liang out of the top bough of a tall tree: "The woodcutters clamber to a high branch, clinging dexterously to the ivy . . . lop off the very topmost bough."

When they bring it home, "A one-eyed man planes it and a deaf man polishes it. The people of Ch'i offer up a golden axe and the people of Ch'u send skilful carpenters . . . so was this stool perfected, that our Prince reclining thereon might daily find support for the weight of his wisdom and virtue."

In the first century A.D. seven of his *fu* still survived. There is a certain crudeness and barbarism in his work which distinguishes it from the earlier but much

less archaic poetry of the land of Ch'u. He died about 140 B.C.

2. Mei Shēng.

Mei Shēng, the companion of Tsou Yang, also began his career at the court of Wu, but afterwards moved to Liang. He wrote a series of *fu* called the *Seven Incitements.* They were probably addressed to the turbulent King of Wu.

" The Crown Prince of Ch'u was lying ill. A stranger from Wu came to ask him how he did, saying, ' It has reached my ears that your Highness's jade limbs are discomforted. Dare I hope that there has been some trifling change ? ' The Prince answered : ' I am deeply grateful for your inquiry.' Then the stranger said : ' We live in times of ease and security. Throughout the length and breadth of the empire all is peace and goodwill. Your Highness is still rich in years.

" ' But for a long while your days and nights have been abandoned to the pursuit of every pleasure and luxury, so that evil humours run riot within you and your entrails are bound as with a cart-thong. . . . Each sound you hear is echoed in space, so that men's voices have become hateful to you. The essence of your soul has leaked from its seat and a hundred diseases have sprung up within you. . . . How has this come to be ? ' The Prince answered : ' Such plenty has our Monarch's power won that on many occasions this affliction has overtaken me. But I have never yet been so sorely stricken.' The stranger said : ' The young noblemen of to-day must needs have palaces to live in and harems for their delight. At home their

mother cossets them; abroad their father protects them, and nowhere do they mingle with the world. Their drink is warmed and their food spiced—fat and dainty morsels, rich and heavy wines. Their clothes are fine-woven, thick and soft, breeding fevers in the blood. Not iron nor stone could withstand the raging furnace that they kindle within. . . . To ride in a litter at home and to be carried in a coach abroad—this I call the engine of palsy. Deep alcoves and cool palaces I call the go-betweens of ague. White teeth and moth-eyebrows I call the axes which assault man's soul. As for sweetmeats and strong liquors, these I name subtlest poisoners, corrosives of the human heart. . . .

" ' But your Highness's present malady needs neither drug, lancet nor moxa. By the speaking of certain magic words it may forthwith be charmed away. Would you not like to hear them? ' The Prince answered: ' Indeed I should.' "

Then follow six *fu*, each of which describes one of the worldly pleasures which the Prince formerly pursued. At the end of each the stranger asks him how he does, and he answers: " I am too weak to rise." The first describes music and the making of a lute; the second, feasting; the fourth, women; the fifth, hunting. These four are reminiscent of similar descriptions in the *Great Summons* and *Kao T'ang Fu*.

The third describes the pleasure of riding in a racing-chariot.

The sixth describes the pleasure of watching the Yang-tze in flood. At the point mentioned (Kuang-ling, near the modern Yangchow) the river is tidal and about as broad as the Thames at Southend.

It is the full moon of the eighth month. From far and wide the lords and barons have gathered together. You and all your brothers go with them to Kuang-ling, to watch the waves at the river-bend.

Now the river is in sight. You cannot see the shape of the waves, but only a vast and featureless expanse. But soon—oh marvellous, the waves! How they gallop, how they leap, how they crowd and race and foam! . . .

At such a sight as this even bent limbs would straighten and stiff joints bend, the lame would walk, the blind see, and the deaf hear. How much the more can such a sight dispel the vapours of a heavy drinker, the fretful fevers of a profligate! . . .

"The Prince said: 'It may well be so. But tell me, of what nature and affinity are the waves?' The stranger answered: 'It is not written. But I have heard my teacher say that there are three things which are like God but are not God. The first is when the river, with a roar like mighty thunder that can be heard a hundred leagues away, flings back the breakers of the sea. The second is when, day and night without pause, a mountain throws out clouds from within. The third is when a great flood spreads and swells, and great waves rise upon the swirling stream. At first they rustle and stir, like white herons fluttering from the sky. But in a little while they prance and flash like white horses drawing an unpainted car with all the awnings spread. Up spirt the breakers and mingle with the cloudy sky. . . .'"

The passage which follows (a comparison of the waves to an advancing army) is imitated by Ou-yang Hsiu in his *Ode to Autumn*.[1]

It is so full of place-names and allusions that it would not be effective in translation.

At the end of this panegyric on waves, the stranger

[1] See *More Translations*. Allen & Unwin, 1919.

asks the Prince if he cannot bring himself " to rise and look upon these delights." But he answers : " I am too weak ; I cannot rise." In the seventh *fu*, the stranger describes the pleasures of erudition.

" Then the stranger said : ' I will bring to you masters of wizardry, cunning contrivers : Chuang Tzŭ and Mu of the land of Wei, Yang Chu and Mo Ti, Pien Yüan and Chan Ho ; these will I bring, and their disciples. They shall confide to you the subtlest mysteries of heaven and earth ; they shall divulge to you the secret principles of all created things. Confucius and Lao Tzŭ shall be your seers. Mencius shall hold the rods and read them ; of ten thousand reckonings, not one shall go astray. These wise men's words are the spells of which I spoke, the magic keys to all that is under the sun. Does your Highness wish to hear them ? ' Then the Prince propped himself upon his bed and cried : ' Oh that I might but hear the words of these wise and eloquent men ! ' A gentle sweat broke out upon his skin ; and suddenly he was ill no more."

3. Ssŭ-ma Hsiang-ju (born *circa* 180 ; died 117 B.C.).

He began his career at the court of the Emperor Ching, but finding that Ching took no interest in poets, he offered his services to Prince Hsiao of Liang. He was well received and given a lodging in the same house as Mei Shēng and Tsou Yang.

But after a few years Prince Hsiao died and Hsiang-ju was left with no possession in the world except the carriage in which he had travelled to Liang. His birthplace was Ch'ēng-tu, the capital of Ssechuan. An old friend of his, Wang Chi, was Prefect of Lin-k'ung, not far from Ch'ēng-tu. To him Hsiang-ju

applied for shelter, and was given a lodging at the town-hall. Wang Chi visited him there every day, but Hsiang-ju found his society tedious and took to pleading illness. Later in the day he would send a courteous message of thanks to the Prefect's house.

There lived at Lin-k'ung two *nouveaux riches*, Cho Wang-sun and Ch'ēng Chēng, both of them concerned in the iron-trade. Cho "had a thousand servants, loved shooting and hunting, and lived like a prince." On hearing that a distinguished man of letters was staying in their town, they determined to make his acquaintance. They therefore gave a great banquet to which they invited the Prefect. Towards midday they persuaded him to send for Hsiang-ju. The poet sent word that he was unwell and could not come. Finally, the Prefect himself went round to the town hall and by main force dragged Hsiang-ju to the feast, where he was received by the millionaires and their guests with profound salutations. When he had given Hsiang-ju time to drink a few glasses of wine, the Prefect placed a lute in his hands, saying, "I have heard it said that you have no aversion to this instrument. Pray condescend to amuse yourself." At first he refused to play, but after a while he consented to play one or two tunes, pretending that he did so out of deference to the Prefect, but in reality because he hoped to entice to the room his host's daughter, Cho Wēn-chün, a young widow who loved music. He looked up and saw that she was watching him from the door. He took a fancy to her, and after the banquet was over sent a messenger, who bribed Wēn-chün's maid to convey to her mistress a declaration of his passion.

That night they eloped together to Ch'ēng-tu, where

Hsiang-ju's childhood had been spent. He took her to his home. Only the walls were standing, but they lived there happily enough.

Her father was furious. "The girl is a fool," he said. "I shall not send her a penny." Friends interceded, but he would not listen.

At last Wēn-chün began to grow tired of their penurious condition, and one day she said to Hsiang-ju: "You had better come with me to Lin-k'ung and borrow some money off my brother. There is no sense in going on living in such discomfort as this." They went to Lin-k'ung and Ssŭ-ma Hsiang-ju sold his horses and carriage. With the proceeds he bought a wine-shop. Wēn-chün served at the counter; Hsiang-ju, wearing only a loin-cloth, helped the apprentices to wash out the cups at the public trough in the market-place.

The millionaire was so much overcome by humiliation that he locked his doors and would not leave the house. But still he refused assistance. His sons and their aristocratic friends were continually assuring him that Hsiang-ju was a credit rather than a disgrace to the family. At last he relented absolutely and completely. He sent to his daughter a hundred servants, a million cash and the *trousseau* of her first marriage. The pair at once returned to Ch'ēng-tu, bought a house and set up in a grand style.

It happened that at that time the Master of the Imperial Hounds was a certain Yang Tē-i, a native of Ch'ēng-tu. Once when he was in attendance the Emperor began praising one of Ssŭ-ma Hsiang-ju's poems. "Would to God," he exclaimed, "such men were alive to-day." "I have been told," said Yang

Tē-i, "by my fellow-townsman Ssŭ-ma Hsiang-ju that it was he who wrote this poem."

Hsiang-ju was summoned to Ch'ang-an. In the Emperor's presence he made slight of the poem, saying that it was written for a provincial court. "But if your Majesty will allow me, I will write a Ballad of the Imperial Hunt."

The poem which Hsiang-ju thought unworthy of an Emperor's attention was called *Tzŭ-hsü*, or "Mr. Nothing." The poem which he made for the Emperor Wu and which he himself calls "The Imperial Hunt" is generally known as the *Shang-lin Fu*, or "Ballad of the Upper Park."

The *Tzŭ-hsü Fu* has the following introduction: The King of Ch'u sent Mr. Nothing on a mission to Ch'i. The King of Ch'i, summoning all the gentlemen within his kingdom, mustered a great concourse of chariots and horsemen, and taking with him the envoys of foreign courts, went out a-hunting. When the hunt was over Mr. Nothing fell into conversation with Old Nobodaddy. Lord Nullikins happened to be standing close by, so they all sat down together.

NOBODADDY. Well, sir, did you get much sport to-day?

NOTHING. I did indeed.

NOBODADDY. You killed a great deal of game, I suppose?

NOTHING. No, sir, I killed very little.

NOBODADDY. How came you, then, to get so much sport?

NOTHING. When I saw that the King of Ch'i was in hopes to dazzle me by the number of his coaches and

horsemen, I answered him with a tale of our own hunting-grounds at Yün-mēng. It was this mischief which gave me sport.

NOBODADDY. Let's hear what passed between you.

NOTHING. The King had ridden out with a thousand chariots and ten thousand picked horsemen, to hunt along the sea-shore. The low ground teemed with beaters; the high ground was close-spread with gins and nets. Hares were meshed, stags snared, deer felled with the arrow, unicorns caught by the leg. . . . Blood spirted on the wheels of our coaches as we galloped along the salt seashore.

The king had made many hits with his bow and was in high good humour with himself. Turning round to me, he called out: "Have you in the land of Ch'u such flat plains and wide valleys, such glorious hunting-grounds as these? Has the King of Ch'u such hunting as ours?"

Then I stepped down from my chariot and answered him, saying, "Your servant is but a humble peasant of Ch'u. Yet I have had the fortune to serve for ten long years in the King's lifeguard, and sometimes it has befallen me to go hunting by his side. Of the parks that lie behind his palace I have indeed some knowledge; but of the outer lowlands I have little right to speak." Then the King urged me to tell him as best I might what little I knew, and I answered: "I have heard it said that in the land of Ch'u there are seven lowlands. One of them I have seen, but the rest I have not seen. That which I have seen is indeed the littlest of them all. It is called Yün-mēng (Cloud-dream). Yün-mēng is 900 leagues square and in its midst there stands a hill, and this hill . . ."

Here begins the *fu* proper. It describes first the scene of the hunt, then the chase itself, then the dancing and water-festival which follow it. Finally, the King of Ch'u climbs to the Terrace of the Summer Cloud and sinks into a mystic trance.

"But your Majesty," says Mr. Nothing to the King of Ch'i, "gallops all day without once leaving your chariot, till your wheels are splashed with the blood of your prey. This is no true sport, and for my part I would make bold to say that I prefer the hunting of Ch'u."

The King of Ch'i made no reply.

Then follows an indignant speech by Nobodaddy, who points out that the great hunt had been organized not in a spirit of vulgar ostentation, but as a compliment to the envoy from Ch'u. As to Mr. Nothing's description of the dancing-girls and water-festival, it exhibited an aspect of manners in the state of Ch'u of which Mr. Nothing had little reason to be proud. "The King of Ch'i's questions about the hunting lands of Ch'u were dictated by politeness; his silence was due to the fact that you were his guest." Then Lord Nullikins (from Ch'ang-an) chuckled and cried: "Ch'u may have lost, but Ch'i has certainly not won. . . . Have none of you heard of the Emperor's Upper Park?" . . .

Then follows the *Shang Lin Fu*, or Ballad of the Upper Park, a description of the Imperial Hunt at Ch'ang-an.

I do not think that anyone who has read Hsiang-ju's poems will blame me for not attempting to translate them. Such a glittering torrent of words has never

since poured from the pen of any writer in the world. Beside him Euphues seems timid and Apuleius cold. He sports with language as a dolphin sports with the sea. Such eloquence cannot be described, much less translated.[1]

Hsiang-ju was given a post at court and soon afterwards sent on a diplomatic mission to the aborigines of the south-west. "His way lay through Ch'ēng-tu, his native town, where he was accorded an imposing welcome. The Governor met him outside the walls, and the sheriff rode before him as his equerry.

"His father-in-law, Cho Wang-sun, when he saw all the grandees of Lin-k'ung riding past his house laden with offerings of meat and wine, regretted that he had for so long opposed his daughter's marriage and henceforward made her as large an allowance as he made to his sons."

His mission was completely successful. The chieftains of five great tribes tendered homage to the Emperor and opened up communications with China. Hsiang-ju returned and was well received by the Emperor, but some old-fashioned inhabitants of Ssechuan questioned the utility of intercourse with these uncivilized tribes. Hsiang-ju thereupon wrote an apologia in which, in true Imperialist style, he draws a harrowing picture of the misery and oppression to which these poor heathen were exposed. "Justice," he wrote, "is unknown. The weak finds no protection; the orphan is enslaved, Can we not imagine these unfortunate creatures piteously exclaiming, 'We have heard that in China humanity and justice prevail, that the Em-

[1] He sought an outlet in poetry for the feelings pent up within him owing to a defect of speech.

peror's compassion is extended in all its amplitude to the very meanest in the land. Are we alone to be debarred from the blessings of his august protection ? ' "

Seeing that the Emperor delighted in the wonder-tales of the Taoists, he made for him the *Fu of the Mighty One,* " well knowing that the usual tales of ascetics who retire to the mountains and lose a great deal of flesh were not at all in accordance with an Emperor's conception of Taoism." The poem is an elegant thesaurus of Taoist mythology.

Soon afterwards Hsiang-ju retired to Mao-ling, not far from the capital. The Emperor, hearing that he was very ill, sent a messenger to collect whatever manuscripts were to be found at Hsiang-ju's house. When he arrived, Hsiang-ju was already dead and no papers could be found.

His wife explained that he had been in the habit of giving his writings to chance-comers and had kept no copies. " But one book he gave to me, saying, ' If any messenger should come from the court, tell him to take this book to the Emperor.' I have no other."

This posthumous work was an appeal for the revival of the long-abandoned sacrifice on Mount T'ai. Eight years later, after a prolonged agitation, the sacrifice was at last performed. I suspect that political motives of some kind actuated the supporters of this revival, a suspicion which no student of Chinese history will consider unduly cynical.

Three other *fu* by Hsiang-ju, in addition to those which I have mentioned above, are still preserved, the *I-ch'un Kung,* in which he moralizes over the fall of the Ch'in dynasty, the *Ch'ang-mēn Fu,* written in order

to stir the Emperor's compassion toward a lady whom he had discarded, and *The Beautiful Lady*, an imitation of Sung Yü's *Master Tēng-t'u.*

Thus of the twenty-nine *fu* by Hsiang-ju which were known in 6 B.C., only six are left. It is the most serious loss that early Chinese poetry sustained.

CHAPTER III

LATER HAN AND CHIN POETS

Yang Hsiung (born 52 B.C., died A.D. 18).

Like Hsiang-ju, he was a native of Ssechuan, and like Hsiang he suffered from a defect of speech which "made him fonder of thinking than of talking."

In his youth he imitated Hsiang-ju's *fu*, writing two descriptions of the Imperial Hunt. He also wrote descriptions of the Sweet Springs near the capital, of the city of Ch'ēng-tu, and of the Sacrifice to Earth. We read that "his mind was turned inwards, feeding upon itself and seeking nothing from the world outside." "Ordinary people," he said, "are concerned with the particular. It is impossible to make them understand a generalization."

At the age of about fifty-eight he published his Conversations (*Fa Yen*), a book which in form deliberately imitates the *Analects* of Confucius. A rigid Puritanism has now possessed him. He regards literature as a useless frivolity and music as a danger. "Someone asked me if I had not at one time neglected philosophy in favour of literature. I was obliged to admit that this was so. When I was a boy, I amused myself with the childish fretwork of poetry. Now that I am a man, I know better."

Someone asked: "May not even poetry be made the instrument of moral exhortation?" He answered: "Better write a plain sermon and stop at that." The poems of Sung Yü and Mei Shēng he regarded as mere wantons. "The poems of Hsiang-ju," he said, "are unsurpassed. But I wish he had not written them." The thought of his day tended towards a synthesis of Confucianism and Taoism. We find Yang Hsiung cautiously accepting certain aspects of Taoist teaching: "What Lao Tzŭ says about The Way and its Applications (*Tao* and *Tē*), I can accept. But when he brings down his bludgeon on humanity and justice, when he dismisses manners and learning, I cannot go with him." Asked if there was any good in Chuang Tzŭ, he answered: "I admire the fewness of his wants." But towards the superstitious side of Taoism he was implacably hostile. When asked if he believed that men could attain to immortality by the practice of Taoist austerities, he answered: "Confucius lies buried beyond the walls of Lu."

His next great work was the *T'ai-hsüan Ching*, or *Canon of Mystery*, a system of cabalistic philosophy intended to supplant the Confucian *Book of Changes*. The theory of the *Changes* is that the apparently complex phenomena of the visible world conform to certain simple and easily intelligible patterns. By correlating any group of phenomena to the "type" to which they belong, one can predict the future development of this group. By the application of this principle, Yang Hsiung was able to predict at the end of his *Conversations* that the Han dynasty, which had already ruled China for 110 years, would continue to rule for an exactly equal space of time. His prophecy was fulfilled.

The *Book of Changes* reduces phenomena to sixty-four patterns or prototypes. Yang Hsiung's new system, using the number three as its base, supplied eighty-one patterns. In the first six chapters of his book he explains the application of his eighty-one patterns ; in the last four chapters he expounds, largely in verse, the general principles of his cosmic philosophy.

I have only attempted here to give a vague and rudimentary idea of what Yang Hsiung's system was. I have, however, said enough to show that it represents at least an attempt to relate events to fixed and ascertainable laws rather than to the working of chance or to the will of some arbitrary Divinity. He stands on the threshold of Science.

In A.D. 6 a revolution broke out and was for a time successful. Its leader, Wang Mang, advocated a new system of land-tenure, state-aid and taxation. Hsiung wrote an essay in favour of these reforms, and has hence incurred the hatred of every successive generation of conservatives. One of his pupils got into trouble with the revolutionary authorities. Owing to a mistake on the part of the police, Yang Hsiung was arrested while reading in an upper room of the T'ien Lu Library. In a fit of panic he threw himself out of the window and was severely injured.

After the revolution was over he retired from public life. He had passed through three courts without seeking or receiving promotion. His whole life had been spent in extreme poverty, his father's estate having only been worth ten catties of gold. It is by an *Ode to Poverty* that he is represented in this book.

The *Conversations* were popular from the outset.

But the *Canon of Mystery* obtained little recognition. "You have laboured in vain," a contemporary told him, "for if the learned are hard put to it to understand the *Book of Changes*, what are they likely to make of your *Canon*?" The historian Pan Ku, writing forty years after Yang Hsiung's death, tells us that the *Conversations* still enjoyed a wide popularity, and that the *Canon of Mystery*, though not well known, was still to be met with.

Chang Hēng (born 78, died A.D. 139).

Chang Hēng was a great astronomer and mathematician. In A.D. 132 he constructed the first seismograph. Eight copper dragons on springs sat round a bowl. Each dragon held a copper ball in his mouth. In the middle of the bowl squatted a toad with wide-open mouth. When there was an earthquake the dragon nearest the direction from which the shock came dropped his ball into the toad's mouth.

On one occasion a dragon released his ball, but no shock was felt and there was no news of an earthquake. The Confucians of the capital, who regarded Chang Hēng as an impious charlatan, were delighted that his contrivance should have proved to be fallible. But in a few days a messenger arrived from the extreme north-west of China announcing that there had been an earthquake in that region.

He was also one of the few scholars who studied the *Canon of Mystery*. His *Meditation upon Mystery*, probably the longest *fu* in existence, follows the shape and scope of the *Li Sao*. But the form is used merely as a framework for the display of exotic eloquence. The poem is a vast web of myth and fancy.

He wrote three descriptions of capitals, the *Eastern City*, the *Western City*, and the *Southern City*; the *Return to the Fields*, in which he resolves to quit the court and live in retirement; the *Fan*, a lyric *fu* of only four lines, and the *Ting Ch'ing Fu*, a poem of eight lines in praise of a lady's beauty. Finally he wrote the *Dancers of Huai-nan* and the *Bones of Chuang Tzŭ*, both of which I have translated in this book.

The *Western City* contains an interesting description of the variety performances which used to take place at Ch'ang-an in the P'ing-lo music-hall. Here he saw a "butting-fight," in which the combatants, like Spanish children playing at *toros*, were armed with horns. There were acrobats called "dipping swallows," who skimmed across a basin of water and back again to their seats without touching the ground, and tight-rope walkers who wrestled in mid-air. Clowns came on dressed as leopards and bears; there was "a white tiger playing on the lute and a blue dragon playing the pan-pipes." There was the pantomime of Huang Kung, the tiger-tamer of the Eastern Seas, who in his old age got drunk, and found to his horror that the old magic no longer worked. And finally there were dancing-girls "whose beauty not Chan Chi [1] nor the çramanas of India [2] could withstand."

Wang I and Wang Yen-shou.

Wang I, editor of the *Ch'u Elegies* (his text is that which is commonly used to-day), was a native of what

[1] Known also as Liu Hsia Hui; a friend of Confucius, renowned for his chastity.

[2] Probably the earliest reference to Buddhism in Chinese poetry.

had once been the land of Ch'u. He came to the capital about A.D. 116. Besides some imitations of Ch'ü Yüan's style he left (I think) only one *fu*, the *Ode to the Lychee*.[1]

His son, Wang Yen-shou, was taken when still a boy to the province of Shantung, and there visited the famous palace built in the middle of the second century B.C. by one of the Emperor Wu's brothers. The great palaces at Ch'ang-an had all been destroyed at the time of Wang Mang's revolution. But this provincial palace, preserved owing to its remoteness from the great political centres of China, was the work of a prince whose life-passion was architecture, and it vied in magnificence with its prototypes at the capital.

Wang Yen-shou's *Description of the Ling-kuang Palace* was probably written before he was twenty. His other surviving *fu*, the *Wangsun* and the *Nightmare*, are perhaps even earlier. All three are in a style markedly individual and vivid. A few years later he was drowned while crossing the Hsiang River, at the age of twenty or, according to other accounts, twenty-four.

Wang Yen-shou's style is very individual. He makes constant use of descriptive words—onomatopœics similar to our "ding-dong," "gibble-gabble," "dilly-dally," etc. Many of the expressions which he uses are not to be found in any dictionary, but it is easy to guess their meaning. This abundant use of reduplications and a strikingly similar homeliness of speech are found again in Chinese literature more than a thousand years later—in the lyric parts of the Mongol dynasty plays. The resemblance may be partly accidental; but it

[1] Fragments of his *fu* about the star-legend of the Spinning Lady are collected in the anthology *Hsü Ko Wēn Yüan*, i. 15.

would not be strange if the colloquial of the fourteenth century preserved, as common speech is apt to do, some archaic tinges.

Perhaps the nearest approach to Wang Yen-shou's style is to be found in the sixth canto[1] of the Pedlar's Song, *Huo Lang Tan*, Act IV.

Shu Hsi.

By the end of the second century A.D. the great period of the *fu* was over. Henceforward most poems in this form were mere imitations of earlier work. The third century produced a whimsical and curious character, Shu Hsi. His *fu* were in what the *History of the Chin Dynasty* calls "a very low and rustic style." *The Adventureless* is a parody or inversion of Ch'ü Yüan's *Distant Wandering*: ". . . I tell of an obscure person buried away among his fields. His barns cover an acre; his thoughts are bounded by the earth. Content with the sordid poverty of his wretched village, he is blind to all life's subtle mysteries; no questionings perplex him. He jolts along the lanes in his wagon or rides upon the scraggy back of a stumbling bull; his whip, a piece of twine tied to a cudgel; his reins, broken well-ropes knotted together.

"Sometimes he will throw a leg across his bamboo stile and amble away upon an adventureless excursion.

"As a landlord, he makes these rules: Two cottages must share a garden and the garden must be a hundred paces from the house. All egg-shells must be strung

[1] It ought, if Bazin had kept his resolution to omit nothing, to have appeared on p. 314 of his *Théâtre Chinois*. It would be impossible to make the points of resemblance apparent in a translation. I mention this passage in the *Huo Lang Tan* for the benefit of those who can consult the original.

at the beginning of the year. Hen-coops to be brought in before the winter."

Then follows a description of the shabby way in which he clothes his children. . . .

" He lets his accountant go shouting into the guest-chamber; builds a barricade to keep out the tax-collector and allows all his women to call him ' Daddy ' instead of ' My Lord.' "

It is as a transcriber of ancient texts, not as a satirist or poet, that Shu Hsi is best known to European scholars. About A.D. 280, robbers rifled the tomb of one of the ancient Princes of Wei. They took the jewels and trinkets, but left where they found them ten cartloads of archaic texts which had been buried by the Prince's side. Shu Hsi was the foremost among a band of scholars who transcribed these texts into the modern character. The most entertaining of the recovered books was the *Mu T'ien Tzŭ Chuan*, which purports to be the account of a journey to the lands of the west undertaken by a Chinese sovereign about 1000 B.C.

He also wrote words for the six Confucian Odes of which only the tunes and titles had been preserved.

T'ao Ch'ien (A.D. 365–427).

I shall not attempt here to give a full account of T'ao Ch'ien's life, but only a few biographical notes to serve as an introduction to his *Dirge*. The popular accounts of him (reproduced by European writers) suggest that his career consisted of only one episode—his attempt to endure official life at P'ēng-tsē and its speedy failure.

In reality his whole life was one long struggle. On one hand he was beset by the necessity of earning

money; on the other by his loathing of restraint. At least four times he entered official life. On one occasion he was away from home (and presumably in office) for six years.

The Return is written in the metrical form of the *fu*, but was intended to be sung. The tune was already lost in the eleventh century. It is essentially a song, and I have found it too fragile to translate, save, in the description of his life after the Return, a few lines describing his excursions by boat or wagon:

Sometimes I row my boat,
Follow the long, mysterious valley down its dark corridors,
Or jolt across the rugged hills;
The trees with gathering shade go on towards their glory,
The rising streams with a full swirl begin to flow.

A very curious and unexpected work of T'ao Ch'ien's is his *Ode to Still the Passions*. It is an ornate, monotonous, and rather frigid description of a lady's beauty. The whole of the middle part of the poem is occupied by the repetition of this formula:

Would I were the lamp that lights you by night
And might shine upon you as you lie in bed;
Alas, soon rises day in the east,
And the lamp is laid aside.

The wish is carried systematically from the lady's collar to her belt, from her belt to her hair-oil, and thence to her eyebrow paint, her mat, her shoes, her shadow.

Thus a fancy natural enough and common to the poetry of all nations is killed by a too copious and methodical application.

I have translated many of his shorter pieces in

170 Chinese Poems. His *Dirge on his own Death* is worth quoting here :

" It was in the year of the Hare, in the month of the mode Wu-i,[1] when the weather was cold and the nights were long, and a great wind hissed and sighed. Master T'ao lay dying ; soon he was to leave the Inn [2] where as a casual traveller he had lodged awhile, and go back to his own home. Friends stood around him weeping and bewailing. ' This very night,' they cried, ' his kinsmen must be assembled for the offering of delicate fruits and the libation of clear wine.' The faces around him grew darker and darker ; the voices grew dim.

" Oh sorrow, sorrow !

" ' Alas, that though of all the myriad creatures which dwell on the vast orbit of the earth and in the immeasurable regions of the sky, it was as a man that it befell me to be born—yet no sooner did I enter upon this high estate than poverty became the master of my fortunes. Platter and cup were always empty ; in winter I had only summer clothes. Yet I was happy ; happy when I went down to the valley to draw water ; happy and singing when I walked with faggots heaped upon my back. By the shady wicket gates I lodged from dusk till dawn. Spring went and autumn came ; there was work in the orchard that must be done. And so with ploughing and hoeing, planting and harvesting, winter came. Then books were my delight and the music of my seven-stringed lute. Now I basked in

[1] The ninth month.

[2] Cf. the burial-song of the Indian Chuhras :

" That was not your real house ;
Where now we lay you is your true home.'

the sunshine, just as in summer I had bathed in the stream. I toiled hard, but was never weary ; for my heart was at rest.

" And because I rejoiced in Heaven's will and submitted to my lot, I lived to be very old.

" But this thing life, how most men love it ! How they treasure the days and hours. For there is always something they are afraid they will not have time to finish ; something that will make men prize them while they are alive and think of them sometimes when they are dead. But I went my way. I cared for none of these things. I felt no blame could smirch me nor praise exalt me. I sat stubbornly in my hovel, drank deeply and wrote my songs. Mischances came, sorrows pursued me, more than any man could bear with heart unmoved. And hence it is that to-day I enter unrepining upon my new estate. . . .'

" His kinsmen came to him at dawn ; friends flocked around him ere it was light. They carried him far off among the wilds, that his soul might be at rest. Long, long and toilsome was the journey ; dark and desolate the door of his tomb. . . .

" The days would go by. Month would follow month. What use to him then would be the speeches, the flattering dirges ? Life was hard. Would death be better ?

" Oh sorrow, sorrow ! "

CHAPTER IV

LATER HISTORY OF THE *FU*—BALLADS—THE TEMPLE

When, in the eighth century, Civil Service candidates began to be tested in literary composition as well as in knowledge of the Confucian classics, the *fu* was the second of the two branches of poetry in which they were examined. They were given a line from some ancient poem and had to write a *fu*, the subject of which was suggested by the given line; sometimes the rhymes they used had to be the words of the given line.

We first hear of *lü fu* (*fu* written in accordance with a definite tone-pattern) in the ninth century. The form was perfected by Liu Ang in the thirteenth century, and further elaborated in the seventeenth.

In the T'ang dynasty the *fu* had become a definitely archaic form, laboriously mastered for examination purposes and used afterwards as a means of literary display. Most of the great poets experimented in this form; but *fu* play a very unimportant part in the works of (for example) Tu Fu, Li Po, or Po Chü-i. There was a slight revival in the ninth century. Tu Mu (the great-nephew of Tu Fu) wrote a *Description of the First Emperor's Palace* which is very well known, though purely academic and derivative. The most

important revival was that of the eleventh century. It was led by Ou-hang Hsiu, whose *Autumn* I translated into prose in another book.[1] I have here given the *Cicada,* which is less well known. Ou-yang Hsiu cleansed the *fu* of the turgid extravagance which had marred it since the Han dynasty. His follower Su Tung-p'o wrote a few *fu* in his master's style and many more in a whimsically pedantic vein which seems to show the influence of Shu Hsi.

At the end of the book I have placed some popular pieces and a long descriptive poem by Po Chü-i.

The first ballad describes what newspapers call a "double tragedy." It is obviously a substitute for the reporter's harrowing columns. It performs the same function; yet in how different a manner! It is full of exquisite detail and written with a soft grace characteristic of the southern regions whence it comes.

The second was written far to the north, under Tartar influences. Those who know the heroic ballads of the Russian Mongols will perhaps find in them affinities to the *Ballad of Mulan.* No doubt many such narrative ballads were once current; but they were seldom committed to writing and very few of them survive.

The *Temple*.

The *Temple* was written in the autumn of A.D. 814. In the summer of 811 Po Chü-i's mother died, and he retired to his country home near the Wei River to accomplish the three obligatory years of mourning and retirement.

[1] *More Translations.* Allen & Unwin, 1919.

In the autumn of 814, the period of mourning having elapsed, he made an excursion to the Southern Hills, some sixteen miles south of Ch'ang-an, and visited the famous Temple of the Awaking to Truth in the Hill of Wang Shun near Lan-t'ien.

The long poem in which he describes his visit is a sort of rhymed Baedeker. Its language has a "puddingy" quality to which I am afraid my translation does more than justice. But Po Chü-i had a strange power of alchemizing flatness into beauty.

Those who know his shorter poems will get from reading the *Temple* the same kind of amused shock that the climber of a lighthouse receives when he suddenly sees his companion appearing as a giant behind some curving screen of glass. Here are all Po Chü-i's familiar tricks magnified to a colossal scale. The "moral" which usually occupies the final couplet or quatrain is here expanded to some forty lines. In many of Po's shorter topographical poems (even those of sixteen to thirty lines) exactly the same structure is visible as in this huge poem of 260 lines, the four main divisions being Approach, Description, Legends, and Moral.

In date the *Temple* comes between the *Everlasting Wrong* (A.D. 806) and the *Lute-girl* (A.D. 816), but it is only in length that it has any affinity to those romantic ballads.

The *Everlasting Wrong*, though skilfully proportioned and elegantly versified, lacks the emotional quality of the early popular ballads. Its characters do not live; they have not even the vivacity of puppets. The *Lute-girl* (which has not yet been at all adequately translated) belongs to a quite different category. Here the poet brings his story into direct relation with his

own emotions; and it is when Po Chü-i is autobiographical that he is usually most successful. The pathos is perhaps exploited a little too relentlessly; the imagery is a little too nicely calculated. But the *Lute-girl* takes its place respectably among Po's adult poems, whereas the *Everlasting Wrong* stands in garish isolation, a youthful bid for notoriety.

Six of the translations included in this book have appeared before; one in *Asia*, one in the *New Statesman*, one in the *London Mercury*, one in the *Spectator* and two in the *Chapbook*. I am deeply indebted to Miss Sybil Pye and Mr. R. C. Trevelyan, who read the proofs and made many valuable suggestions. Finally, I would point out that they are all meant to be read out loud. They cease to be metrical at all if only scanned with the eye.

THE TEMPLE AND OTHER POEMS

THE KAO T'ANG FU

By Sung Yü.

Once when Hsiang, King of Ch'u, was walking with Sung Yü on the Cloud-Dream Terrace, he looked up at the Kao T'ang Shrine. Above it was a coil of mist, now pointing steadily skywards like a pinnacle of rock, now suddenly dissolving and in a single moment diffused into a thousand diverse shapes. Then the King questioned Sung Yü, saying, "What Cloud-spirit is this?" And Yü answered: "It is called Morning Cloud." The King said: "Why has it this name?" and Yü answered: "Long ago a former king was wandering upon this mountain of Kao T'ang. When night came he was tired and slept beyond the dawn. And early in the morning he dreamt that a lady stood before him saying, 'I am a girl from the Witches' Hill. I have come as a stranger to Kao T'ang, and hearing that my lord the King was travelling on this same mountain, I desired to offer him the service of pillow and mat.' So the King lay with her, and when they parted, she said to him: 'My home is on the southern side of the Witches' Hill, where from its rounded summit a sudden chasm falls. At dawn I am the Morning Cloud; at dusk, the Driving Rain. So dawn by dawn and dusk by dusk I dwell beneath the southern crest.'

"Next day at sunrise he looked towards the hill, and it was even as she had said. Therefore he built her a shrine in the place where she had come to him and called it the Temple of the Morning Cloud."

Then King Hsiang questioned Sung Yü, saying, "Tell me of this Morning Cloud, in what guise does she first appear?" And Yü answered: "Still is she and sombre as a forest of tall pines, where tree stands close to tree; but soon she kindles with a shimmering light; as when a beautiful lady, looking for her lover, raises lawn sleeves to shade her eyes from the sun. Suddenly her being is transformed; swiftly now she races as a chariot whirled onward by galloping steeds, with feathery flags outspread. From the rain a dankness she borrows, and from the wind an icy breath. But soon the wind has dropped, the rain has cleared, and Morning Cloud has vanished from the sky."

The King said: "May I too visit the mountain whereon she was met?" Sung Yü answered: "Your Majesty may do so." The King said: "What manner of place is it?" Yü answered: "It is a high, conspicuous hill, from whose summit immeasurable prospects may be scanned. Broad is it and vast; parent and home of ten thousand creatures. Its summit is in the realms of Heaven; its base is founded in the deep. Its marvels cannot be told, nor its giant prodigies rehearsed." The King said: "Nevertheless I beg you to sing of it for me," and Sung Yü did not refuse.

To what shall I liken this high and desolate hill?
In all the world it has no kin.

The Witches' Mountain [1]
Knows no such terraces, such causeways of coiling stone.
Climb the treeless rocks, look down into the deep,
Where under their tall banks the gathered waters lie.
After long rain the sky has cleared afresh.
A hundred valleys hold concourse! In silent wrath
Mad waters tussle, the high floods
Brim abreast and tumble to their home.
The shallows spread and spread, the restless pools
Mount their steep shores.
Ever the wind blows; great waves are piled
Like barrows on a lonely field;
Now on a widening bed
They jostle savagely or beat upon their shores;
Now cramped, they draw together and are at peace.
Now in precipitous creeks, with violence renewed,
High they bound as breakers that an ocean-ship
Sees on the Stony Foreland flung.
The pebbles grind their flinty sides, grate and churn
With a din that shakes the sky.
The great rocks drown; rise up, and sink again,
Or suddenly above the waves stand high and bare.
The turbulent eddies reel and swirl;
Great waves go floundering;
They run, they leap into the air, they dance;
Scrimmage like clouds, could clouds echo
With cataractine roar.

[1] The Witches' Mountain (Wu Shan) of ancient times was near Ching-chou, in Hupeh. The modern Wu Shan is much higher up the Yang-tze.

Wild beasts dance in terror, fly headlong from the flood,
Quaking tiger, panther, wolf and buffalo dismayed—
Panting they skelter ; eagle and osprey, falcon and kite
Take wing and hide themselves away ;
Haunch quaking, breath bated—
No heart to pounce or snatch.

And now the creatures of the water, scaly kind
And serpent, chased by panic from their dens,
Mount to safe sunshine one and all upon an island-bank ;
Scorpion and alligator, turtle and giant crab
In scrambling shoals criss-crossed,
Fins floundering, scales flourished—
Now slithering, now twining,
They gain the middle bank and stare afar.

They see dark trees whose winter-flowers
Dazzle the eye ; white shine those woods
As a full heaven, where star is blent with star.
And over many woods of chestnut-trees
Thick leaf and blossom brood ;
Here twin catalpas trail their cups
From branches subtly twined.
Through the dark leafage ripples roam,
Tides run ; to east and west
The forest spreads her wings
In delicate wafting of innumerable thrills ;
Green leaves, purple fruit-skins,
Red buds, white stems
And slender branches wailing
Reed-music to the wind.

Climb higher, look afar.
Tall cliffs by their dizzy winding
Confound the eye. Yonder in rank are propped
Stupendous spires; here are great boulders split
In hideous escarpment, leaning crags,
And cliffs from whose disrupted crest
Rock slithers after rock
Into a chaos of disastered stone.
Horned pinnacles rear back at the chasm's brink,
Dismayed and staggering.

So in huge conglomeration
Bulk is strewn on bulk, pile heaped on pile;
Till, topping all, the pillared summit soars
Like a great mowers'-stone
Erect beneath the towering of the inland hills.

Above, a rainbow glistens on the hill's grave crest;
Below, a void whose chasms seem
Bottomless, save for the voice
Of pine-trees carried upward on the wind.

Steep tilts the sodden bank, noisy with filtering waters;
Bear-wise clambers the traveller, slinging from tree to tree.
Will the climbing never be ended?
Sweat pours from his limbs;
He stops, he is bewildered, dares not move.
Loneliness besets him, disappointment and weak irresolute grief.
Often in such case
The soul is changed, fears causeless come,
Hearts fabled stout, of Mēng Fēn or Hsia Yü,[1]

[1] Legendary heroes.

Forget their boldness. For suddenly (whence came
they ?)
Flock bestial legions, hairy multitudes,
Creatures magically spawned, children of ghost or god,
Some winged, some footed ; all terrible, huge and
strange,
Beyond the power of tale to tell.

Around the shrine
Flat spreads the mountain-roof and wide,
A mighty flail, on whose broad palm
Thick grow the scented herbs, orchis and river-broom,
Crow's-fan, clustering thyme, grey lavender.
Delicately the grasses dip and myriad bushes blend
The scent of tender boughs, wherein,
Each seeking his lost mate,
Small birds lament ; from neighbouring twig
Trill answers trill—the royal-coot,
The yellow witwall, herald-of-dusk, warbler of Ch'u,
Desolate-bride, sister-come-home-again
And trailing pheasant housed in his high nest
In the fresh season carol at their play
Lusty and heedless ; or in sudden choir declaim
Skilled music matched to the stream's pause and flow.

Here dwell masters of magic, wizards of the North ;
On high they roam in happy throngs,[1] to gather in
The sacrificial grain. See, now they dedicate
The stainless victim, hymn the Lord
Of the Revolving Chamber, to the many Gods
Libations pour ; with worship venerate
The Unity Supreme.

[1] The text of this line and the next is corrupt and my translation only conjectural.

The prayers are over, the liturgies incanted.
Then shall my lord the King
Ride in a magic chariot of jade
By tawny dragons drawn.
Banners and tall gonfalons shall he trail
Whose pennons intertwine. Harpers shall pluck
Their giant chords, and courtly music flow,
Tinged by the eager winds that pass
With sadness not its own;
Legends of anguish, sorrowful tales shall the singer's voice
Temper to that unhappy tune
Till they that listen throb with answering sighs.

Last come the serried huntsmen, knee to knee,
Many as the stars of heaven. For wingèd hunt
The word is passed; they set the gags between their teeth
And suddenly are dumb.
Not yet from arbalest or bow
Is arrow shot; no net is spread.
Over wide streams they wade, through tangled thickets stride.
Ere the bird take wing to fly or the beast set foot to roam,
Suddenly, through stroke invisible, blood spirts on haunch or claw.
The huntsman's work is ended; the carts are heavy with prey.
Such is the Mountain of Kao T'ang.

But should my lord desire to hunt there he must needs practise long abstinence and fasting, and by

augury select the day and hour. He must be dressed in black; he must be carried in an unpainted chair. His banner must be woven with clouds; his streamers must be fashioned like the rainbow, his awning, of halcyon feathers.

Then the wind shall rise, the rain shall cease, and for a thousand leagues the clear sky shall be unfurled. And when the last cloud has vanished, he shall go quietly to the place of meeting.

Thereafter shall my lord the King deal kindly for ever with the thousand lands, sorrow for the wrongs of his people, promote the wise and good, and make whole whatever was amiss. No longer shall the apertures of his intelligence be choked; to his soul's scrutiny all hidden things shall be laid bare. His years shall be prolonged, his strength eternally endure.

WINE

By Tsou Yang (*circa* 200–140 B.C.).

The clear makes wine, the thick makes *li* ;
The clear's a wise man, swift of apprehension ;
The thick, a dull-brained dolt.
Yet both with corn were yeasted
Of the self-same trickling hill ; with rice were brewed
Of the same country field—
Not sooner than the summer-winds began to blow,
Nor after the onset of Autumn's iron reign.
Oh marvellous, that things so like
Should taste so different ; emblem how admirable
Of Man's capacities, diverse yet fit
Each in its several way to serve !
Here limpid liquor rolls its fire ;
Here flows sweet-brew with rich and oozy motion.
The lees have sunk, the must is drawn away ;
The green jars open stand.
Now through the wicker sieve, now through the cloth
Filters the liquid ; now is it racked, now fined,
To grace the carnivals of common folk,
The courtly ceremonies of the great.
Diverse in kind and quality is it brewed ;

Shalo there is, and the Green Wine of Ling ;
" Cheng Village," Johsia, the limpid " Baron Kao " ;
Popo from between the Passes, and from the Azure Isles
The wine Jung-t'ing.
Fierce, long-fermented spirits ; generous raw wines
Whose fumes a thousand days confuse the head.

A wise King rules our land ; his favoured court
Is rich in holidays ; round him he gathers
Grey-bearded ministers and decorous guests.
Wide, comfortable couches by carven screens
He bids his servants lay ; and for the feast decrees
Goblets of yak's horn, dishes of silver and gold.
Long robes sweep,
Broad sleeves flap,
Ribbons dance in the air—
The mighty men, contented heroes,
Smiling take their seats.
My lord the King
Lies at his jewelled table, at his back
A jewelled screen.
His hand is raised ; that one sign suddenly
Sets many jaws in motion ; at every seat
Millet is crunched and pitchers freely flow.
Soon are platters empty, wine-cups standing on their heads.
Then speaks the Counsellor a rhyme :
Friends (says he), *when your neighbour sings on Doh*
Do you chime in with Soh,
Lest mirth to madness grow !
Whereon the kindly King
Sends round a famous cake whose virtue can dispel

To-night's intoxication and prevent
To-morrow's heavy head.
" Live for ever, O King, rule for ever, and may your
glory shine
Eternal as the sun by day, the moon by night ! " [1]

[1] This poem first occurs in a book which, though earlier than the seventh century, is probably a forgery. But this does not prove that the poem itself is not genuine.

POVERTY

By Yang Hsiung (born 52 B.C., died A.D. 18).

I, Yang Tzŭ, hid from life—
Fled from the common world to a lonely place,
Where to the right a great wilderness touched me,
And on the left my neighbour was the Hill of Sung.
Beggars whose tenements
Lie wall to wall, though they be tattered and poor,
Rough-used, despised and scorned, are yet in companies
And sociable clans conjoined. But I, for solitude
Too sorrowful, faltered at heart and cried aloud,
"O Poverty, come hither and talk with me!
For should I be flung
To the utmost frontiers of space,
To the tenantless margins of the world,
Yet wouldst thou be with me;
Thy henchman am I, O Poverty,
And thy harsh penalties, my pay.
Not in childhood only, in infancy
When laughing I would build
Castles of soil or sand, wast thou
My more than neighbour, for thy roof
Touched mine, and our two homes were one;
But in manhood also weighed I with the great
Lighter, because of thee,
Than fluff or feather; more frail my fortunes

Than gossamer, who to the State submitting
Great worth, found small employ;
Withdrawing, heard no blame."

Then many years I wandered as a stranger
With these thoughts in my heart:
"Others wear broidered coats; my homespun is not whole.
Others eat millet and rice, I boil the fennel-leaf.
No toy nor treasure is mine,
Nor aught to make me glad.
The swallows by my father's house
Play on; but I abroad the world
Sell my day-labour, pawn my coat for bread.
Servant of many masters,
Hand-chafed I dig, heel-blistered hoe,
Bare-backed to the wind and rain.
And that all this befell me,
That friends and favourites forsook me,
That up the hill of State so laboured was my climb,
Who should bear blame? Who but thou, O Poverty,
Was cause of all my woe?

"I fled thee high and far, but thou across the hills of heaven
Like a hawk didst follow me.
I fled thee among the rocks, in caverns of stone I hid;
But thou up those huge steeps
Didst follow me.
I fled thee to the ocean, sailed that cypress ship
Across the storm, but thou,
Whether on wave-crest or in the hollows of the sea,
Didst ever follow me.

" And if I move, you too are stirring ;
If I lie down, you are at rest.
Have you no other friend in all the world ?
What would you seek of me ?
Go, Poverty ! and pester me no more."

Then said Poverty : " So be it, my master ;
For 'tis plain that should I stay
You will not cease to slander and defame me.
But listen, I too have a heart that is full
And a tale that must be told.

" My father's father long, long ago
Was illustrious in the land ; of virtue so excellent
That by the King's throne in council he stood,
Admonishing the rulers how to make statutes and laws.
Of earth were the stairs, roofed over with thatch,
Not carved nor hung.
But when the world in latter days
Was given over to folly, fell about in darkness,
Then gluttons gathered together,
Sought wealth and found it,
Despised my grand-dad, they were so insolent and proud ;
Built arbours of onyx, terraces of jade,
And huge halls to dwell in ; lapped lakes of wine.
On a broth of swans they fed,
And held no Audience at their court.
Thrice daily would they look into their souls and cry,
' Our hearts are free from sin.'
And they that dwelt in the Palace of the King
Had great substance, and their guerdon was gold
Stacked high as the hills.

Your small woes you remember;
But my blest deeds you have forgot.
Did I not teach you
By gradual usage, indifferent to endure
Summer's heat and winter's cold?
(And that which neither heat nor cold can touch—
Is it not eternal as the Gods?)

"I, Poverty,
Turned from you the envy of the covetous, taught you to fear
Neither Chieh the Tyrant nor the Robber Chih.
Others, my master,
Quake behind bolt and bar, while you alone
Live open to the world.
Others by care
And pitiful apprehension are cast down,
While you are gay and free."
Thus spoke Poverty, and when her speech was ended,
Stern of countenance and with dilated eye,
She gathered up the folds of her garment and rose from where she sat,
Passed down the stairway and left my house.

"Farewell," said Poverty, "for now I leave you.
To that hill I take my way
Where sheltering, the Lord of Kuchu's sons
Have learnt to ply my trade."
Then I, Yang Tzŭ, left the mat where I lay
And cried: "O Poverty, let my crooked words
Be as unspoken; forget that I have wronged thee.
I have heard truth, O Poverty, and received it.

Live with me always, for of your company
I shall not weary till I die."
Then Poverty came back and dwelt with me,
Nor since has left my side.

THE BONES OF CHUANG TZU[1]

By Chang Hēng (A.D. 78–139).

I, Chang P'ing-Tzu, had traversed the Nine Wilds and
seen their wonders,
In the eight continents beheld the ways of Man,
The Sun's procession, the orbit of the Stars,
The surging of the dragon, the soaring of the phœnix in
his flight.
In the red desert to the south I sweltered,
And northward waded through the wintry burghs of Yu.
Through the Valley of Darkness to the west I wandered,
And eastward travelled to the Sun's extreme abode,
The stooping Mulberry Tree.

So the seasons sped; weak autumn languished,
A small wind woke the cold.

And now with rearing of rein-horse,
Plunging of the tracer, round I fetched
My high-roofed chariot to westward.
Along the dykes we loitered, past many meadows,
And far away among the dunes and hills.
Suddenly I looked and by the roadside
I saw a man's bones lying in the squelchy earth,

[1] The great Taoist philosopher whose works have been translated by Professor Giles.

Black rime-frost over him ; and I in sorrow spoke
And asked him, saying, " Dead man, how was it ?
Fled you with your friend from famine and for the last grains
Gambled and lost ? Was this earth your tomb,
Or did floods carry you from afar ? Were you mighty, were you wise,
Were you foolish and poor ? A warrior, or a girl ? "
Then a wonder came ; for out of the silence a voice—
Thin echo only, in no substance was the Spirit seen—
Mysteriously answered, saying, " I was a man of Sung,
Of the clan of Chuang ; Chou was my name.
Beyond the climes of common thought
My reason soared, yet could I not save myself ;
For at the last, when the long charter of my years was told,
I too, for all my magic, by Age was brought
To the Black Hill of Death.
Wherefore, O Master, do you question me ? "
Then I answered :
" Let me plead for you upon the Five Hill-tops,
Let me pray for you to the Gods of Heaven and the Gods of Earth,
That your white bones may arise,
And your limbs be joined anew.
The God of the North shall give me back your ears ;
I will scour the Southland for your eyes ;
From the sunrise will I wrest your feet ;
The West shall yield your heart.
I will set each several organ in its throne ;
Each subtle sense will I restore.
Would you not have it so ? "
The dead man answered me :

" O Friend, how strange and unacceptable your words !
In death I rest and am at peace ; in life, I toiled and
strove.
Is the hardness of the winter stream
Better than the melting of spring ?
All pride that the body knew,
Was it not lighter than dust ?
What Ch'ao and Hsü despised,
What Po-ch'ēng fled,
Shall I desire, whom death
Already has hidden in the Eternal Way—
Where Li Chu cannot see me,
Nor Tzŭ Yeh hear me,
Where neither Yao nor Shun can praise me,
Nor the tyrants Chieh and Hsin condemn me,
Nor wolf nor tiger harm me,
Lance prick me nor sword wound me ?
Of the Primal Spirit is my substance ; I am a wave
In the river of Darkness and Light.
The Maker of All Things is my Father and Mother,
Heaven is my bed and earth my cushion,
The thunder and lightning are my drum and fan,
The sun and moon my candle and my torch,
The Milky Way my moat, the stars my jewels.
With Nature am I conjoined ;
I have no passion, no desire.
Wash me and I shall be no whiter,
Foul me and I shall yet be clean.
I come not, yet am here ;
Hasten not, yet am swift."
The voice stopped, there was silence.
A ghostly light
Faded and expired.

I gazed upon the dead, stared in sorrow and compassion.
Then I called upon my servant that was with me
To tie his silken scarf about those bones
And wrap them in a cloak of sombre dust ;
While I, as offering to the soul of this dead man,
Poured my hot tears upon the margin of the road.

THE DANCERS OF HUAI-NAN

By Chang Hĕng.

(A Fragment)

I saw them dancing at Huai-nan and made this poem of praise:

The instruments of music are made ready,
Strong wine is in our cups;
Flute-songs flutter and a din of magic drums.
Sound scatters like foam, surges free as a flood. . . .
And now when the drinkers were all drunken,
And the sun had fallen to the west,
Up rose the fair ones to the dance,
Well painted and apparelled,
In veils of soft gossamer
All wound and meshed;
And ribbons they unravelled,
And scarfs to bind about their heads.
The wielder of the little stick
Whispers them to their places, and the steady drums
Draw them through the mazes of the dance.
They have raised their long sleeves, they have covered their eyes;

Slowly their shrill voices
Swell the steady song.
And the song said:
As a frightened bird whose love
Has wandered away from the nest,
I flutter my desolate wings.
For the wind blows back to my home,
And I long for my father's house.

Subtly from slender hips they swing,
Swaying, slanting delicately up and down.
And like the crimson mallow's flower
Glows their beauty, shedding flames afar.
They lift languid glances,
Peep distrustfully, till of a sudden
Ablaze with liquid light
Their soft eyes kindle. So dance to dance
Endlessly they weave, break off and dance again.
Now flutter their cuffs like a great bird in flight,
Now toss their long white sleeves like whirling snow.
So the hours go by, till now at last
The powder has blown from their cheeks, the black
from their brows,
Flustered now are the fair faces, pins of pearl
Torn away, tangled the black tresses.
With combs they catch and gather in
The straying locks, put on the gossamer gown
That trailing winds about them, and in unison
Of body, song and dress, obedient
Each shadows each, as they glide softly to and fro.

THE LYCHEE-TREE

By Wang I (*circa* A.D. 120).

Sombre as the heavens when morning clouds arise,
Bushy as a great broom held across the sky,
Vast as the spaces of a lofty house,
Deep fretted as a line of stony hills.
Long branches twining,
Green leaves clustering,
And all a-glimmer like a mist that lightly lies
Across the morning sun;
All spangled, darted with fire like a sky
Of populous stars.
Shell like a fisherman's red net;
Fruit white and lustrous as a pearl, . . .
Lambent as the jewel of Ho, more strange
Than the saffron-stone of Wu.
Now sigh we at the beauty of its show,
Now triumph in its taste.
Sweet juices lie in the mouth;
Soft scents invade the mind.
All flavours here are joined, yet none is master;
A hundred diverse tastes
Blend in such harmony no man can say
That one outstrips the rest. Sovereign of sweets,
Peerless, pre-eminent fruit, who dwellest apart
In noble solitude!

THE WANGSUN[1]

By Wang Yen-shou, son of Wang I (*circa* A.D. 130).

Sublime was he, stupendous in invention,
Who planned the miracles of earth and sky.
Wondrous the power that charged
Small things with secret beauty, moving in them all.
See now the wangsun, crafty creature, mean of size,
Uncouth of form; the wrinkled face
Of an aged man; the body of a little child.
See how in turn he blinks and blenches with an air
Pathetically puzzled, dimly gazes
Under tired lids, through languid lashes
Looks tragic and hollow-eyed, rumples his brow,
Scatters this way and that
An insolent, astonished glare;
Sniffs and snorts, snuffs and sneezes,
Snicks and cocks his knowing little ears!
Now like a dotard mouths and chews;
Or hoots and hisses through his pouted lips;
Shows gnashing teeth, grates and grinds ill-temperedly,
Gobbles and puffs and scolds.
And every now and then,
Down to his belly, from the larder that he keeps
In either cheek, he sends
Little consignments lowered cautiously.

[1] A kind of small, tailless ape (?).

Sometimes he squats
Like a puppy on its haunches, or hare-like humps
An arching back;
Smirks and wheedles with ingratiating sweetness;
Or suddenly takes to whining, surly snarling;
Then, like a ravening tiger roars.

He lives in thick forests, deep among the hills,
Or houses in the clefts of sharp, precipitous rocks;
Alert and agile is his nature, nimble are his wits;
Swift are his contortions,
Apt to every need,
Whether he climb tall tree-stems of a hundred feet,
Or sways on the shuddering shoulder of a long bough.
Before him, the dark gullies of unfathomable streams;
Behind, the silent hollows of the lonely hills.
Twigs and tendrils are his rocking-chairs,
On rungs of rotting wood he trips
Up perilous places; sometimes, leap after leap,
Like lightning flits through the woods.
Sometimes he saunters with a sad, forsaken air;
Then suddenly peeps round
Beaming with satisfaction. Up he springs,
Leaps and prances, whoops, and scampers on his way.
Up cliffs he scrambles, up pointed rocks,
Dances on shale that shifts or twigs that snap,
Suddenly swerves and lightly passes. . . .
Oh, what tongue could unravel
The tale of all his tricks?

Alas, one trait
With the human tribe he shares; their sweets his sweet,

Their bitter is his bitter. Off sugar from the vat
Or brewer's dregs he loves to sup.
So men put wine where he will pass.
How he races to the bowl!
How nimbly licks and swills!
Now he staggers, feels dazed and foolish,
Darkness falls upon his eyes. . . .
He sleeps and knows no more.
Up steal the trappers, catch him by the mane,
Then to a string or ribbon tie him, lead him home;
Tether him in the stable or lock him into the yard;
Where faces all day long
Gaze, gape, gasp at him and will not go away.

THE NIGHTMARE

By Wang Yen-shou.

One night, about the time I came of age, I dreamt that demon creatures fought with me while I slept. . . . When I woke I told this vision in verse, that the dreamers of posterity might use my poem as a spell to drive off evil dreams. And so often has it proved its worth that I dare not any longer hide it from the world. The words are these:

Once, as in the darkness I lay asleep by night,
Strange things suddenly saw I in my dream;
All my dream was of monsters that came about me
while I slept,
Devils and demons, four-horned, serpent-necked,
Fishes with bird-tails, three-legged bogies
From six eyes staring; dragons hideous,
Yet three-part human.
On rushed the foul flocks, grisly legions,
Stood round me, stretched out their arms,
Danced their hands about me, and sought to snatch
me from my bed.
Then cried I (and in my dream
My voice was thick with anger and my words all awry):
"Ill-spawned elves, how dare you
Beset with your dire shapes Creation's cleanest,

Shapeliest creature, Man ? " Then straightway I struck
out,
Flashed my fists like lightning among them, thumped
like thunder,
Here slit Jack-o'-Lantern,
Here smashed fierce Hog-Face,
Battered wights and goblins,
Smote venturous vampires, pounded in the dust
Imps, gnomes and lobs,
Kobolds and kelpies ;
Swiped bulge-eyed bogies, oafs and elves ;
Clove Tough-head's triple skull, threw down
Clutching Night-hag, flogged the gawky Ear-wig Fiend
That floundered toward me on its tail.

I struck at staring eyes,
Stamped on upturned faces ; through close ranks
Of hoofs I cut my way, buried my fingers deep
In half-formed flesh ;
Ghouls tore at my touch ; I slit sharp noses,
Trod on red tongues, seized shaggy manes,
Shook bald-heads by the beard.
Then was a scuffling. Arms and legs together
Chasing, crashing and sliding ; a helter-skelter
Of feet lost and found in the tugging and toppling,
Cuffing, cudgelling, frenzied flogging. . . .

So fought I, till terror and dismay
Shook those foul flocks ; panic spread like a flame
Down mutinous ranks ; they stand, they falter,
Those ghastly legions ; but fleeing, suddenly turn
Glazed eyes upon me, to see how now I fare.
At last, to end their treachery

Again I rushed upon them, braved their slaver and
snares,
Stood on a high place, and lashed down among them,
Shrieking and cursing as my blows crashed.
Then three by three and four by four
One after another hop-a-trot they fled,
Bellowing and bawling till the air was full of their
breath—
Grumbling and snarling,
Those vanquished ogres, demons discomfited,
Some that would fain have run
Lolling and lurching, some that for cramped limbs
Could not stir from where they stood. Some over
belly-wounds
Bent double ; some in agony gasping and groaning.
Suddenly the clouds broke and (I knew not why)
A thin light filtered the darkness ; then, while again
I sighed in wonder that those disastrous creatures,
Dire monstrosities, should dare assail
A clean and comely man, . . . there sounded in my
ears
A twittering and crowing. And outdoors it was light.
The noisy cock, mindful that dawn was in the sky,
Had crowed his warning, and the startled ghosts,
Because they heard dawn heralded, had fled
In terror and tribulation from the rising day.

(*In an epilogue the poet seeks consolation in the fact that many evil dreams and occurrences have in the past been omens of good. Duke Huan of Ch'i, while hunting in the marshes, saw in a vision an ogre " as broad as a cartwheel and as long as a shaft, wearing a purple coat and red cap." It was an omen that he would rise to the*

Pentarchy. Wu Ting, Emperor of the Shang dynasty, was haunted in a dream by the face of the man who afterwards became his wise counsellor and friend. Wēn, Duke of Chin, dreamt that the Marquis of Ch'u held him prostrate and sucked out his brains ; yet his kingdom defeated Ch'u. Lao Tzŭ made use of demons, and thereby became leader among the Spirits of Heaven. "So evil turns to good.")

THE LING-KUANG PALACE AT LU

(Part of a *fu*)

By Wang Yen-Shou.

Birds of the air, beasts of the earth
Sprout from the timber; to swift-slanting beams
The coursing tiger clings, or perilously leaping
In a wild onrush rears his shocky mane.
A young dragon wreathes his coils,
And as he prances seems to nod his slithery head.
The Red Bird of the South
Soars skyward from his niche; the serpent ring on ring
Enfolds his beam. The White Deer all alone
Cranes from his pillar;
The squat griffin on his corbel curled
Shoulders the lintel; while the knowing hare
Lies cosy at the girder's side.
Up the tall rafters deftly clambering
Ape chases ape. The black bears loll their tongues
And curl a snarling lip; hunch, rebellious
Of the burden on their backs; with levelled heads
Glare each at each in useless rage.
Far off the Scythians [1]
On their high perch kneel face to face,
Gloomily decorous, with their long skulls and hollow eyes;

[1] Carved figures.

Crane their big heads, and frowning seem to fight
Some overmastering sorrow—or maybe, the dread
Of poising in so perilous a place.
High, high among the roof-beams Gods and Fairies walk,
Magic maidens peep round the windows and look down.
And upon the great walls,
Flickering in a dim semblance, glint and hover
The Spirits of the Dead.
And here all Heaven and Earth is painted, all living things
After their tribes, and all wild marryings
Of sort with sort; strange Spirits of the Sea,
Gods of the Hills. To all their thousand guises
Had the painter formed
His reds and blues, and all the wonders of life
Had he shaped truthfully and coloured after their kinds.
First showed he the Opening of Chaos and the beginnings of the Ancient World;
The five dragons with joined wings;
Nine-neck, the Lord of Men;
Fu Hsi with his scaly body,
Nü Wo serpent-limbed.
Vast, formless presences,
At first unmarked, but to the steady gazer's eye
Rising in luminous bulk;
Huang Ti, T'ang and Yü,
Each crowned as he was crowned and robed as he was clad.
The Three Kings were there, many riotous damsels and turbulent lords,

Loyal knights, dutiful sons,
Mighty scholars, faithful wives,
Victors and vanquished, wise men and fools,
None was missing from his place.

HOT CAKE

By Shu Hsi (third century A.D.).

Winter has come; fierce is the cold;
In the sharp morning air new-risen we meet.
Rheum freezes in the nose;
Frost hangs about the chin.
For hollow bellies, for chattering teeth and shivering knees
What better than hot cake?
Soft as the down of spring,
Whiter than autumn wool!
Dense and swift the steam
Rises, swells and spreads.
Fragrance flies through the air,
Is scattered far and wide,
Steals down along the wind and wets
The covetous mouth of passer-by.
Servants and grooms
Throw sidelong glances, munch the empty air.
They lick their lips who serve;
While lines of envious lackeys by the wall
Stand dryly swallowing.

THE CICADA

By Ou-yang Hsiu.

In the summer of the first year of Chia-yu (A.D. 1056), there was a great flood. By order of the Emperor I went to the Wine Spring Temple to pray for fine weather, when I heard a cicada singing. Upon which subject I wrote this poem:

Hushed was the courtyard of the temple;
Solemn stood I, gazing
At the bright roofs and gables,
The glorious summits of that towering shrine.
Untroubled were my thoughts, intently prayed
My fasting soul, for every wandering sense
Was gathered to its home.
Unmoved I watched the motions of the world,
Saw deep into the nature of ten thousand things.
Suddenly the rain was over, no wind stirred
The morning-calm; round all the sky
Was cloudless blue, and the last thunder rolled.
Then we, to strew sweet-scented herbs upon the floor,
Drew near the coloured cloister, by whose side
Some old trees grew amid the grass
Of the deserted court. Here was a thing that cried
Upon a tree-top, sucking the shrill wind
To wail it back in a long whistling note—

That clasping in its arms
A tapering twig perpetually sighed,
Now shrill as flute, now soft as mandolin;
Sometimes a piercing cry
Choked at its very uttering, sometimes a cold tune
Dwindled to silence, then suddenly flowed again,
A single note, wandering in strange keys,
An air, yet fraught
With undertone of hidden harmony.
"What creature can this be?" "Cicada is its name."
"Are you not he, cicada,
Of whom I have heard told you can transform
Your body, magically moulding it
To new estate? Are you not he who, born
Upon the dung-heap, coveted the sky,
The clean and open air;
Found wings to mount the wind, yet skyward sailing
Upon a leafy tree-top checked your flight,
Pleased with its trim retreat? Are you not he
Who with the dew for drink, the wind for food,
Grows never old nor languid; who with looped locks
Frames womanish beauty?
Again your voice, cicada!
Not grave; not gay; part Lydian,
Part Dorian your tune that, suddenly begun,
Suddenly ceases.
Long since have I marvelled
How of ten thousand creatures there is not one
But has its tune; how, as each season takes its turn,
A hundred new birds sing, each weather wakes
A hundred insects from their sleep.
Now lisp the mango-birds
Like pretty children, prattling at their play.

As shuttle at the sounding loom
The tireless cricket creaks. Beautiful the flexions
Of tongue and trilling throat, how valiantly
They spend themselves to do it!
And even the croakers of the pond,
When they get rain to fill
Their miry, parching puddles, while they sip
New rivulets and browse the soppy earth,
Sing through the live-long night. And like enough
May frogs be passionate; but oh, what seeks
The silent worm in song? [1]
These and a thousand others, little and great,
Too many to name them all,
Myriads of creatures—each after its own shape and kin,
Hold at their season ceaseless tournament of song;
But swiftly, swiftly
Their days run out, time transmutes them, and there is silence,
Desert-silence where they sang.

Alas, philosophy has taught
That the transcending mind in its strange, level world
Sees not kinds, contraries, classes or degrees.
And if of living things
Man once seemed best, what has he but a knack
Of facile speech, what but a plausible scheme
Of signs and ciphers that perpetuate
His thoughts and phrases? And on these expends
His brooding wits, consumes his vital breath;

[1] All through the winter and spring the worm lives underground. On the first night of summer it issues and, in the thrill of its second birth, begins to sing in a shrill, woman's voice. It sings all night, and then is silent again for ever.

One droning out the extremity of his woe,
Another to the wide world publishing
His nobleness of heart!
Thus, though he shares
The brief span of all creatures, yet his song
A hundred ages echoes after him.
But you, cicada,
What know you of this? Only for yourself
You make your music. . . ."
So was I pondering, comparing,
Setting difference by difference, gain by gain,
When suddenly the clouds came back and overhead
The storm blazed and crashed, spilling huge drops
Out of the rumbling sky. . . .
And silent now
Was the cicada's voice.

THE TEMPLE

By Po Chü-i.

Autumn: the ninth year of Yüan Ho;[1]
The eighth month, and the moon swelling her arc;
It was then I travelled to the Temple of Wu-chēn,
A temple terraced on Wang Shun's Hill.
While still the mountain was many leagues away,
Of scurrying waters we heard the plash and fret.
From here the traveller, leaving carriage and horse,
Begins to wade through the shallows of the Blue Stream,
His hand pillared on a green holly-staff,
His feet treading the torrent's white stones.
A strange quiet stole on ears and eyes,
That knew no longer the blare of the human world.
From mountain-foot gazing at mountain-top,
Now we doubted if indeed it could be climbed;
Who had guessed that a path deep hidden there
Twisting and bending crept to the topmost brow?
Under the flagstaff we made our first halt;
Next we rested in the shadow of the Stone Shrine.[2]
The shrine-room was scarce a cubit long,
With doors and windows unshuttered and unbarred.
I peered down, but could not see the dead;
Stalactites hung like a woman's hair.

[1] A.D. 814.

[2] Where the mummified bodies of priests were kept, in miniature temples.

Waked from sleep, a pair of white bats
Fled from the coffin with a whirr of snowy wings.
I turned away, and saw the Temple gate—
Scarlet eaves flanked by steeps of green;
'Twas as though a hand had ripped the mountain-side
And filled the cleft with a temple's walls and towers.
Within the gate, no level ground;
Little ground, but much empty sky.
Cells and cloisters, terraces and spires
High and low, followed the jut of the hill.
On rocky plateaux with no earth to hold
Were trees and shrubs, gnarled and very lean.
Roots and stems stretched to grip the stone;
Humped and bent, they writhed like a coiling snake.
In broken ranks pine and cassia stood,
Through the four seasons forever shady-green.
On tender twigs and delicate branches breathing
A quiet music played like strings in the wind.
Never pierced by the light of sun or moon,
Green locked with green, shade clasping shade.
A hidden bird sometimes softly sings;
Like a cricket's chirp sounds its muffled song.

At the Strangers' Arbour a while we stayed our steps;
We sat down, but had no mind to rest.
In a little while we had opened the northern door.
Ten thousand leagues suddenly stretched at our feet!
Brushing the eaves, shredded rainbows swept;
Circling the beams, clouds spun and whirled.
Through red sunlight white rain fell;
Azure and storm swam in a blended stream.
In a wild green clustered grasses and trees,
The eye's orbit swallowed the plain of Ch'in.

Wei River was too small to see;
The Mounds of Han,[1] littler than a clenched fist.
I looked back; a line of red fence,
Broken and twisting, marked the way we had trod.
Far below, toiling one by one,
Later climbers straggled on the face of the hill.

Straight before me were many Treasure Towers,
Whose wind-bells at the four corners sang.
At door and window, cornice and architrave,
"Kap, kap," the tinkle of gold and jade.
Some say that here the Buddha Kāśyapa[2]
Long ago quitted Life and Death.
Still they keep his iron begging-bowl,
With the furrow of his fingers chiselled deep at the base.
To the east there opens the Jade Image Hall,
Where white Buddhas sit like serried trees.
We shook from our garments the journey's grime and dust,
And bowing worshipped those faces of frozen snow
Whose white cassocks like folded hoar-frost hung,
Whose beaded crowns glittered like a shower of hail.
We looked closer; surely Spirits willed
This handicraft, never chisel carved!

Next we climbed to the Chamber of Kuan-yin;[3]
From afar we sniffed its odours of sandal-wood.

[1] The tombs of the Han Emperors.

[2] Lived about 600,000,000,000 years ago and achieved Buddhahood at the age of 20,000.

[3] One of the self-denying Bodhisattvas who abstain from entering Buddhahood in order better to assist erring humanity. In Sanskrit, Avalokiteśvara.

At the top of the steps each doffed his shoes ;
With bated stride we crossed the Jasper Hall.
The Jewelled Mirror on six pillars propped,
The Four Seats cased in hammered gold
Through the black night glowed with beams of their own,
Nor had we need to light candle or lamp.
These many treasures in concert nodded and swayed—
Banners of coral, pendants of cornaline.
When the wind came, jewels chimed and sang
Softly, softly like the music of Paradise.
White pearls like frozen dewdrops hanging ;
Dark rubies spilt like clots of blood,
Spangled and sown on the Buddha's twisted hair,
Together fashioned his Sevenfold Jewel-crown.
In twin vases of pallid tourmaline
(Their colour colder than the waters of an autumn stream)
The calcined relics of Buddha's Body rest—
Rounded pebbles, smooth as the Specular Stone.
A jade flute, by angels long ago
Borne as a gift to the Garden of Jetavan ! [1]
It blows a music sweet as the crane's song
That Spirits of Heaven earthward well might draw.

It was at autumn's height,
The fifteenth day and the moon's orbit full.
Wide I flung the three eastern gates ;
A golden spectre walked at the chapel-door.
And jewel-beams now with moonbeams strove,
In freshness and beauty darting a crystal light
That cooled the spirit and limbs of those it touched,
Nor all night-long needed they to rest.

[1] Near Benares ; here Buddha preached most of his Sūtras and the first monastery was founded.

At dawn I sought the road to the Southern Tope,
Where wild bamboos nodded in clustered grace.
In the lonely forest no one crossed my path;
Beside me faltered a cold butterfly.
Mountain fruits whose names I did not know
With their prodigal bushes hedged the pathway in;
The hungry here copious food had found;
Idly I plucked, to test sour and sweet.

South of the road, the Spirit of the Blue Dell,[1]
With his green umbrella and white paper pence!
When the year is closing, the people are ordered to grow,
As herbs of offering, marsil and motherwort;
So sacred the place, that never yet was stained
Its pure earth with sacrificial blood.

In a high cairn four or five rocks
Dangerously heaped, deep-scarred and heeling—
With what purpose did he that made the World
Pile them here at the eastern corner of the cliff?
Their slippery flank no foot has marked,
But mosses stipple like a flowered writing-scroll.
I came to the cairn, I climbed it right to the top;
Beneath my feet a measureless chasm dropped.
My eyes were dizzy, hand and knee quogged—
I did not dare bend my head and look.
A boisterous wind rose from under the rocks,
Seized me with it and tore the ground from my feet.
My shirt and robe fanned like mighty wings,
And wide-spreading bore me like a bird to the sky.

[1] A native, non-Buddhist deity.

High about me, triangular and sharp,
Like a cluster of sword-points many summits rose.
The white mist that struck them in its airy course
They tore asunder, and carved a patch of blue.

And now the sun was sinking in the north-west;
His evening beams from a crimson globe he shed,
Till far beyond the great fields of green
His sulphurous disk suddenly down he drove.

And now the moon was rising in the south-east;
In waves of coolness the night air flowed.
From the grey bottom of the hundred-fathom pool
Shines out the image of the moon's golden disk!
Blue as its name, the Lan River flows
Singing and plashing forever day and night.
I gazed down; like a green finger-ring
In winding circuits it follows the curves of the hill;
Sometimes spreading to a wide, lazy stream,
Sometimes striding to a foamy cataract.
Out from the deepest and clearest pool of all,
In a strange froth the Dragon's-spittle [1] flows.

I bent down; a dangerous ladder of stones
Paved beneath me a sheer and dizzy path.
I gripped the ivy, I walked on fallen trees,
Tracking the monkeys who came to drink at the stream.
Like a whirl of snowflakes the startled herons rose,
In damask dances the red sturgeon leapt.
For a while I rested, then plunging in the cool stream,
From my weary body I washed the stains away.
Deep or shallow, all was crystal clear;

[1] Ambergris.

I watched through the water my own thighs and feet.
Content I gazed at the stream's clear bed;
Wondered, but knew not, whence its waters flowed.

The eastern bank with rare stones is rife;
In serried courses the dusky crysoprase,
That outward turns a smooth, glossy face;
In its deep core secret diamonds [1] lie.
Pien of Ch'u [2] died long ago,
And rare gems are often cast aside.
Sometimes a radiance leaks from the hill by night
To link its beams with the brightness of moon and stars.

At the central dome, where the hills highest rise,
The sky is pillared on a column of green jade;
Where even the spotty lizard cannot climb
Can I, a man, foothold hope to find?
In the top is hollowed the White-lotus lake;
With purple cusps the clear waves are crowned.
The name I heard, but the place I could not reach;
Beyond the region of mortal things it lies.

And standing here, a flat rock I saw,
Cubit-square, like a great paving-stone,
Midway up fastened in the cliff-wall;
And down below it, a thousand-foot drop.
Here they say that a Master in ancient days

[1] The stone mentioned (*yü-fan*), though praised by Confucius and used in the ceremonies of his native state, cannot be identified. Its name evokes vague ideas of rarity and beauty.

[2] Suffered mutilation because he had offered to his prince a gem which experts rejected. Afterwards it turned out to be genuine.

Sat till he conquered the concepts of Life and Death.
The place is called the Settled Heart Stone;
By aged men the tale is still told.

I turned back to the Shrine of Fairies' Tryst;
Thick creepers covered its old walls.
Here it was that a mortal [1] long ago
On new-grown wings flew to the dark sky;
Westward a garden of agaric and rue
Faces the terrace where his magic herbs were dried.
And sometimes still on clear moonlit nights
In the sky is heard a yellow-crane's voice.

I turned and sought the Painted Dragon Hall,
Where the bearded figures of two ancient men
By the Holy Lectern at sermon-time are seen
In gleeful worship to nod their hoary heads;
Who, going home to their cave beneath the river,
Of weather-dragons the writhing shapes assume.
When rain is coming they puff a white smoke
In front of the steps, from a round hole in the stone.

Once a priest who copied the Holy Books
(Of purpose dauntless and body undefiled)
Loved yonder pigeons, that far beyond the clouds
Fly in flocks beating a thousand wings.
They came and dropped him water in his writing-bowl;
Then sipped afresh in the river under the rocks.
Each day thrice they went and came,
Nor ever once missed their wonted time.
When the Book was finished, he was named "Holy Priest";

[1] The wizard Wang Shun, after whom the hill is named.

For like glory in vain his fellows vied.
He sang the hymns of the Lotus Blossom Book,[1]
Again and again, a thousand, a million times.
His body withered, but his mouth still was strong,
Till his tongue turned to a red lotus-flower.
His bones no more are seen;
But the rock where he sat is still carved with his fame.

On a plastered wall are frescoes from the hand of Wu,[2]
Whose pencil-colours never-fading glow.
On a white screen is writing by the master Ch'u,[3]
The tones subtle as the day it first dried.

Magical prospects, monuments divine—
Now all were visited.
Here we had tarried five nights and days;
Yet homeward now with loitering footsteps trod.
I, that a man of the wild hills was born,
Floundering fell into the web of the World's net.
Caught in its trammels, they forced me to study books;
Twitched and tore me down the path of public life.
Soon I rose to be Bachelor of Arts;
In the Record Office, in the Censorate I sat.
My simple bluntness did not suit the times;
A profitless servant, I drew the royal pay.
The sense of this made me always ashamed,
And every pleasure a deep brooding dimmed.
To little purpose I sapped my heart's strength,
Till seeming age shrank my youthful frame.

[1] The verses of the Saddharmapundarīka Sūtra, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 21.

[2] The great eighth-century painter, Wu Tao-tzŭ.

[3] The calligrapher, Ch'u Sui-liang, A.D. 596–658.

From the very hour I doffed belt and cap
I marked how with them sorrow slank away.
But now that I wander in the freedom of streams and hills
My heart to its folly comfortably yields.
Like a wild deer that has torn the hunter's net
I range abroad by no halters barred.
Like a captive fish loosed into the Great Sea
To my marble basin I shall not ever return.
My body girt in the hermit's single dress,
My hand holding the Book of Chuang Chou,[1]
On these hills at last I am come to dwell,
Loosed forever from the shackles of a trim world.
I have lived in labour forty years and more;
If Life's remnant vacantly I spend,
Seventy being our span, then thirty years
Of idleness are still left to live.

[1] See above, pp. 11, 38, 48, 81.

CHIAO CHUNG-CH'ING'S WIFE

In the period Chien-an (A.D. 196–220), at the end of the Han dynasty, a certain Chiao Chung-Ch'ing was sheriff of Lu-Chiang (in Kiangsi).[1] His wife, Liu Lan-chih, was driven away by his mother. She swore she would not marry again, and when her family forced her to do so she threw herself into the river. When the sheriff heard of it, he hanged himself from a tree in his courtyard. The people of the day were sorry for them, and made this ballad:

A peacock flew to the south-east,
A mile he flew, and once he stopped.[2]
"At thirteen I learnt to weave silk,
At fourteen I learnt to make clothes.
At fifteen I could play the flat harp,
At sixteen I knew the Odes and Book.[3]

[1] At that time a garrison town of 424,683 inhabitants near the modern Kiukiang. It had once formed part of the princedom of Huai-nan. (*Hsü Han Chih*, xxii. 6.)

[2] These lines have no connection with the ballad which follows. Openings of this kind may be found in the ballads of other countries. They probably served to indicate the tune which was to be used. Divorced from their proper context, they are, as in this case, frequently enigmatic.

[3] Of history.

At seventeen I was made your wife;
From care and sorrow my heart was never free,
For you went off to be sheriff in the town;
I stayed behind, but my love did not change.
I was left alone in an empty bridal-room—
It was not often that we two could meet.
At cock-crow I entered the loom to weave;
Night after night, I toiled and got no rest.
In three days I would finish five bits,
And yet the Great One[1] chid me for being slow.
Husband, it is not because I weave too slowly
That I find it hard to be a wife in your house!
I said to myself, 'I will not be driven away.'
Yet if I stay, what use will it be?
Go then quickly, speak to the lady my mistress,
And while there is time, let me return to my home."
The Sheriff listened to her words.
Up to the Hall he went and, "Mother," he said,
"The signs of my birth marked me for a humble course;
Yet luck was with me when I took this girl to wife.
Our hair was plaited, we shared pillow and mat,
Swore friendship until the Yellow Springs of Death.
We have served you together two years or three—
Since the beginning, only so little a while,
In nothing has the girl offended nor done amiss.
What has happened to bring trouble between you?"
Then spoke the Sheriff's mother:
"Come, my son, what strange talk is this?
Your wife is fickle-hearted and ill-bred,
Headstrong in all her ways,
And I have long been planning and worrying
How I might free you of this stubborn girl.

[1] The mother-in-law.

Our neighbour to eastward has a steadfast daughter;
She calls herself Lofu of the land of Ch'in,
The loveliest limbs that ever yet you saw!
Let mother get her for you to be your wife.
And as soon as may be, send the other away—
Send her quickly and do not let her bide."
Long the Sheriff knelt down before her,
Bowed before his mother; his eyes drooped to the floor.
"Mother, if you send this wife away,
I will live single all the days of my life."
And when his mother heard him,
She was very angry and beat with a cudgel on the bed,
And "Little son," she said, "are you not afraid?
Dare you answer me in such a wife's praise?
Though neither love nor duty move you to obey me,
Do not dream that I will let you work your will."
He did not speak, he made no cry.
Twice he bowed, and went back to his room;
He lifted up his voice to speak with his young bride,
But his breath caught and the words would not come.
"It is not *I* that would send you away,
It is my mother that has scolded and harried me.
Do you live at your father's, just for a little while,
For I must be going to take my orders in the town—
Not for long; I shall soon be coming home,
And when I am home, I will fetch you back again.
Think well of what I have said,
Turn it over in your thoughts and do not disobey me."
The young wife spoke to the Sheriff of the town:
"Give me no more of this foolish tangled talk.
Long ago, when the year was at its spring,
I left my father and came to your grand home.
I obeyed my mistress in every task I plied;

In doing or leaving had I any will of my own?
Night and day I strove, but trouble snared me;
I was fallen on evil days. Never in spoken word
Did I transgress or fail; as a daughter, ever
In tender service I waited on all her needs.
Yet even so she sought to send me away.
It is no use to talk of coming back.'
These things are mine: a broidered waist-jacket,
With tassels hanging that shine with a light of their own;
And a red gauze, square-curtained bed,
With scented bags hanging at the four posts;
And shuttered boxes, sixty, seventy,
With green marbles strung on blue threads—
So many boxes, and none is like the last;
And in the boxes, so many kinds of things!
If I am vile, my things must also be scorned;
They will not be worth keeping for the after-one,[1]
Yet I leave them to her, to take as a gift should she choose.
For henceforth we shall not meet again.
May you ever be happy and strong,
And for long years not forget our love!"

A cock crowed, outside it was growing light;
The young wife rose and tidied herself.
She puts about her a broidered travelling dress,
Takes what she needs, four or five things,
And now on her feet she slips her damask shoes;
In her hair are shining combs of tortoise-shell.
Her waist is supple as the flow of rustling silk;
At her ear she dangles a bright crescent moon.

[1] Her successor.

White her fingers as a pared onion skin ;
Redder her lips than the crimson sulphur-stone.
Slender, slender she treads with small steps,
More fine, more lovely than any lady in the world.
She goes to the Hall, low she bows her head ;
But the stubborn mother's anger did not cease.
" When I was a girl," the young wife said,
" I was brought up far from any town,
A wild thing, never schooled or taught,
And needs must shame a great man's house.
From you I have taken much copper and silk,
And cannot bear that you should drive me away.
To-day I am going back to my father's home ;
And this house I leave in Madam's hands."

From her little sister [1] it was worse work to part ;
Her tears fell like a string of small pearls :
" When new-wed I first came to your home,
You had just learnt to lean on the bed and walk.
To-day, when I am driven away,
Little sister, you have grown as tall as me.
Work for Madam, cherish her with all your heart,
Strive to serve and help her as best you may.
Those seventh-days and last days but one,[2]
Do not forget what nice romps we had ! "
She left the gate, mounted her coach and went ;
Of tears she dropt many hundred rows.
The Sheriff with his horse was riding on before ;
The young wife rode in her carriage behind.
A pattering of hoofs, a thundering of wheels—
And they met each other at the mouth of the great road.

[1] -in-law. [2] Holidays.

He left his horse and sat beside her in the coach,
He bowed his head and into her ear he spoke;
Swore an oath that he would not give her up,
If for a little while she returned to her home:
"I for a little while must go to the town;
It will not be long before I come back again.
By the sky I swear that I will not abandon you."
"Dear husband," the young wife cried,
"I know that you have some little love for me
And that if it were your choice
I should not have to wait there long till you came.
You perhaps may be steadfast as a great rock;
I know that *I* am but a bending reed;
The bending reed, weak as a strand of thread;
The great rock, too mighty to move from its place.
I have a brother, my own father's son,
Whose heart and deeds are wild as a summer storm.
I fear he will not let me have my way—
Will thwart my will if only to cause me pain."
She raised her hand, and long, long she waved;
The old love in each heart was new.
She enters the gate, she mounts her father's Hall,
Languidly moves, with no greeting in her face.
"Child," cries her mother, and loud she claps her hands,
"We little thought to see you home so soon.
For at thirteen I taught you to weave silk,
At fourteen you could cut clothes.
At fifteen you played on the flat harp,
At sixteen you knew the Precedents and Rites;
At seventeen I sent you to be a bride,
And heard you promise forever to be true.
What is your fault, what have you done amiss,

That he will not keep you, but sends you back to your
home ? "
Then Lan-chih, ashamed before her mother,
" Oh nothing, nothing, mother, have I done amiss ; "
And a deep pity tore the mother's heart.

She has been at home ten days or more
When the burgomaster sends a go-between,
Saying : " My master has a third son,
For grace and beauty none like him in the world ;
He is eighteen or nineteen years old,
A lovely boy, gifted and of ready speech."
Then said the mother to her daughter,
" Daughter, this offer cannot be refused."
But the daughter weeping answered,
" When I left my husband's house,
He looked kindly upon me and an oath he swore
That come what might he would not abandon me.
And to-day, false and wicked should I be,
Were I untrue to this our great love.
Break off the parley, mother, without more ado,
While to the Sheriff a gentle message I send."
Then said her mother to the go-between :
" In our humble house there is indeed a daughter
Was once married, but come back to us again.
If she was not fit to be a sheriff's wife,
How can she be worthy of a burgomaster's son ?
Go further, seek a better bride ;
If you cannot find one, come to us again."
Not many days had the messenger been gone
When an alderman [1] came on like quest.

[1] As an emissary from the Governor. A couplet seems to have dropped out at this point.

"They tell me there is a lady of the house of Lan
Whose father's fathers long served the State.
My master would have you know that his fifth son
Is handsome, clever, and has not yet a wife.
His own alderman he sends as a go-between,
And his own clerk to carry you his words."
And straight he told them: "In the Lord Governor's house
Has grown up this fine young gentleman
Who now wishes to be bound with the Great Bond,
And therefore sends us with a message to your noble house."
The old mother was thanking the messengers,
Telling them at large of the promise her daughter had made,
But hardly had she begun her speech,
When the brother heard, and loud to his sister he cried:
"Girl, consider what thing it is you do!
First you were a sheriff's wife,
And now you can be married to a lord!
Wide as earth from sky is the space between;
Here is a splendour that shall brighten all your days.
But if you will not be married to this young lord,
What refuge have you, whither else shall you turn?"
Then Lan-chih raised her hand and answered:
"Brother, there is good sense in what you say.
I left my home to serve another man,
But in mid-road [1] returned to my brother's house,
And in his hands must all my fortunes rest;
I must not ask to follow my own desire.
Though to the Sheriff I am bound, yet now, I think,
To eternity we shall not meet again.

[1] I.e. in the mid-road of marriage.

Brother, I yield. Tell them that I consent.
The wedding may be made."
The messengers left their couch, their faces beaming,
With a bland "yes, yes" and "so, so."
They went to their quarters, to the Governor they spoke:
"We, your servants, have fulfilled your high command;
The words we have uttered were not without effect."
When the Lord Governor was told of all that had passed,
His heart was filled with great mirth and joy;
He read the Calendar, he opened the sacred book.
He found it written that in this very month
The Six Stars were in fortunate harmony,
The Good Omen fell on the thirtieth day;
And now already the twenty-seventh was come.
"Go, my servants, and make this wedding for me."

With urgent message they speed the marriage gear;
Hither and thither they whirl like clouds in the sky
A blue-sparrow and white-dove boat;
At its four corners a dragon-child flag
Delicately curls in the wind; a golden coach
Wheeled with jade; and dappled coursers prance
With trailing plumes and saddles fretted with gold.
The wedding gift, three million pence
Pierced in the middle and strung with blue thread;
Of coloured stuffs three hundred bits.
Strange fish in the towns of Chiao and Kuang
Were marketed; and up to the Governor's gate
March four or five hundred serving men.

Then said the mother:
"Daughter dear, this moment a letter has come,

Saying to-morrow my Lord will fetch you away.
How comes it that you are not making your dress?
You would not like it if the wedding had to wait!"
No word did the daughter speak.
With her handkerchief she covered her face and wept;
The tears crept down like the tide on a sea-shore.
From its dark corner she shifts her glassy [1] bed,
And under the garden window she sets it down.
With her left hand she wields the flat shears,
In her right hand she holds the fine brocade.
In the morning she sews a heavy, broidered skirt;
In the evening she has finished her thin damask gown.
The day was over, and she in the gathering gloom,
With aching soul, stood at the door and wept.

When the Sheriff heard of what had passed,
He begged leave to return for a little while.
He had not spurred two leagues or three,
When his harnessed horse raised a doleful moan.
The young wife knew the horse's neigh,
She put on her shoes, she hastened down the road.
Woefully they looked at each other from afar,
When each saw it was his dear one that had come.
She raised her hand, she struck the horse's saddle,
Wailing and sobbing as though her heart would break.
"Since you left me," she said,
"Things happen—one could not tell it would be so—
Yet it has happened, I have changed; and you would understand,
If only you knew. How could I keep my vow?
I have a brother, my own father's son,
He forced us to it; he broke my mother's will,

[1] Made of glazed tiles.

Gave me to another man, and you, my Lord,
Must ask no more of me."
Then spoke the Sheriff
To his young wife:
"Well done!" he cried. "Well done to have climbed so high!
The great rock would have lasted a thousand years
Firm and square, the reed in a day was snapped.
From glory to glory will my fine lady stride,
While I go down to the Yellow Springs alone."
Then answered the young wife, and to the Sheriff she said:
"What do you mean? Why do you speak to me so?
It was the same with both of us; both of us were forced—
You were; and so was I too.
In the Land of Death you shall not be alone;
Do not fail me in what to-day you have said!"
They held hands, they parted and went their ways,
He to his house and she to the door of her home.
(That death should ever keep us from those we love
Is terrible, more than words can tell;
Yet sadder, I think, a hundred thousand times
Is the lot of those whom the living world divides!)

The sheriff is back in his home.
He goes to the Hall and bows to his mother dear.
(That day the wind was very cold;
Cold and strong, it shook the flowers and trees;
A cruel frost stiffened the pansies in the court.)
"Mother, mother, to-day I go to darkness,
And you will live alone.
It was you, mother, who laid this wicked plot;

Cease to anger my ghost when I am dead!
May your life linger like a rock of the Southern Hills,
Your back be straight and your limbs ever strong!"
When the mother heard his talk,
The bitter tears at each word they flowed.
"O woe is me, will you that are of good blood,
Whose father's fathers were ministers at court,
Die for a woman? Little sense you have
Of high and low! Listen now to my plot.
Our eastern neighbour has a true and steadfast girl,
Whose grace and beauty are known to all the town.
I will seek her for you, you shall have her between dawn and dusk."
The Sheriff bowed again and went his way.
Deep he sighed in the empty bridal room;
He was thinking of his plan and therefore sighing stood.
He turned his head, he moved towards the door;
Tugged by the grief that mounted in his boiling breast.

While horses neighed and the oxen sadly lowed,[1]
The bride, she entered her tabernacle green.[2]
Swiftly the day closed and the dusk grew black;
All was still and the third watch had struck.
"With the day that has ended my life also ends,
My soul shall go and only my body stay."
She lifts her skirt, she puts off her satin shoes,
She rises up and walks into the still lake.

They went to the Sheriff; they told him of what had passed.
When his heart knew that he would not see her again,

[1] An evil omen.
[2] A marriage-tent of green-blue cloth.

He stood for a while gazing at a tall tree,
Then hung himself from the south-eastern bough.

The two clans buried them in the same grave,
Buried them together on the side of a flowery hill.
To east and west they planted fir and yew,
To left and right they sowed the *wu-t'ung*.
The trees prospered ; they roofed the tomb with shade,
Bough with bough, leaf with leaf entwined ;
And on the branches were two flying birds,
Whose own name was Birds of True Love.
They raise their heads and face to face they sing
Every night, till the fifth watch is told.
The hurried traveller stays his foot to hear,
The lonely wife rises and walks her room.

Listen to this tale, you men of the afterworld,
Learn its moral and hold it safe in your hearts.

THE SONG OF LO-FU

(Anonymous. First century A.D. ?)

THE sun has risen on the eastern brim of the world,
Shines into the high chambers of the house of Ch'in.
In the house of Ch'in is a lovely lady dwelling,
That calls herself the Lady Lo-fu.
This lady loves her silk-worms and mulberry-trees;
She's plucking leaves at the southern edge of the town.
With blue thread are the joints of her basket bound;
Of cassia-boughs are the loops of her basket made.
Her soft hair hangs in loose plaits;
The pearl at her ear shines like a dazzling moon.
Of yellow damask is made her shirt beneath;
Of purple damask is made her cloak above.
The passer-by who looks on Lo-fu
Drops his luggage and strokes the hair on his cheek.
The young men when they see Lo-fu
Doff their caps and show their red scarfs.
The labouring ploughman thinks no more of his plough,
The hind in the field thinks no more of his hoe.
Wistful and angry each leaves his task
And can only sit gazing at Lo-fu.
The Lord Governor drives his coach from the south;
His five horses suddenly slow their pace.
He's sent his sheriff: "Quickly bring me word
Of what house may this lovely lady be?"

" In the house of Ch'in the fair lady dwells ;
She calls herself the Lady Lo-fu."
" Oh tell me, sheriff, tell me how old she may be ! "
" A score of years she has not yet filled ;
To fifteen she has added somewhat more."
The Lord Governor calls to Lo-fu :
" Tell me, lady, will you ride by me or no ? "
She stands before him, she gives him answer straight :
" My Lord Governor has not ready wits.
Has he not guessed that just as he has a wife
So I too have my husband dear ?
Yonder to eastward a band of horse is riding,
More than a thousand, and my love is at their head."
" By what sign shall I your husband know ? "
" His white horse is followed by a black colt,
With blue thread is tied the horse's tail ;
With yellow gold is bridled that horse's head.
At his waist he wears a windlass-hilted sword
You could not buy for many pounds of gold.
At fifteen they made him a Governor's clerk ;
At twenty they made him a Chamberlain at court.
At thirty he sat at the Emperor's Council Board,
At forty they gave him a city for his very own—
A wholesome man, fair, white and fine ;
Soft and silky is the down that grows on his cheek,
Proudly and proudly he walks to the palace gate ;
Stately, stately he strides through the palace hall.
In that great hall thousands of courtiers sit,
Yet none but names him the finest man of them all."

THE BALLAD OF MULAN

(Written in northern China during the domination of the Wei Tartars, fifth century A.D. ; contemporary with the famous rock-carvings of Yün-kang.)

CLICK, click, forever click, click ;
Mulan sits at the door and weaves.
Listen, and you will not hear the shuttle's sound,
But only hear a girl's sobs and sighs.
" Oh tell me, lady, are you thinking of your love,
Oh tell me, lady, are you longing for your dear ? "
" Oh no, oh no, I am not thinking of my love,
Oh no, oh no, I am not longing for my dear.
But last night I read the battle-roll ;
The Khan has ordered a great levy of men.
The battle-roll was written in twelve books,
And in each book stood my father's name.
My father's sons are not grown men,
And of all my brothers, none is older than me.
Oh let me to the market to buy saddle and horse,
And ride with the soldiers to take my father's place."
In the eastern market she's bought a gallant horse,
In the western market she's bought saddle and cloth.
In the southern market she's bought snaffle and reins,
In the northern market she's bought a tall whip.
In the morning she stole from her father's and mother's house ;

At night she was camping by the Yellow River's side.
She could not hear her father and mother calling to her by her name,
But only the song of the Yellow River as its hurrying waters hissed and swirled through the night.
At dawn they left the River and went on their way;
At dusk they came to the Black Water's side.
She could not hear her father and mother calling to her by her name,
She could only hear the muffled voices of Scythian horsemen riding on the hills of Yen.
A thousand leagues she tramped on the errands of war,
Frontiers and hills she crossed like a bird in flight.
Through the northern air echoed the watchman's tap;
The wintry light gleamed on coats of mail.
The captain had fought a hundred fights, and died;
The warriors in ten years had won their rest.
They went home; they saw the Emperor's face;
The Son of Heaven was seated in the Hall of Light.
To the strong in battle lordships and lands he gave;
And of prize money a hundred thousand strings.
Then spoke the Khan and asked her what she would take.
"Oh, Mulan asks not to be made
A Counsellor at the Khan's court;
She only begs for a camel that can march
A thousand leagues a day,
To take her back to her home."

When her father and mother heard that she had come,
They went out to the wall and led her back to the house.
When her little sister heard that she had come,
She went to the door and rouged her face afresh.

When her little brother heard that his sister had come,
He sharpened his knife and darted like a flash
Towards the pigs and sheep.

She opened the gate that leads to the eastern tower,
She sat on her bed that stood in the western tower.
She cast aside her heavy soldier's cloak,
And wore again her old-time dress.
She stood at the window and bound her cloudy hair;
She went to the mirror and fastened her yellow combs.
She left the house and met her messmates in the road;
Her messmates were startled out of their wits.
They had marched with her for twelve years of war
And never known that Mulan was a girl.
For the male hare has a lilting, lolloping gait,
And the female hare has a wild and roving eye;
But set them both scampering side by side,
And who so wise could tell you "This is he"?

BUDDHA'S PITY

(From the *Upāsaka Śila Sūtra*,[1] chap. iii.)

My children,

The Enlightened One, because He saw Mankind drowning in the Great Sea of Birth, Death and Sorrow, and longed to save them,

For this was moved to pity.

Because He saw the men of the world straying in false paths, and none to guide them,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw that they lay wallowing in the mire of the Five Lusts, in dissolute abandonment,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw them still fettered to their wealth, their wives and their children, knowing not how to cast them aside,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw them doing evil with hand, heart and tongue, and many times receiving the bitter fruits of sin, yet ever yielding to their desires,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw that they slaked the thirst of the Five Lusts as it were with brackish water,

[1] Translated into Chinese from Sanskrit in A.D. 428 by the Central Indian monk Dharmarāksha (385–433), who lived in China from 414 till his death.

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw that though they longed for happiness, they made for themselves no *karma* of happiness: and though they hated pain, yet willingly made for themselves a *karma* of pain: and though they coveted the joys of Heaven, would not follow His commandments on earth,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw them afraid of birth, old-age and death, yet still pursuing the works that lead to birth, old-age and death,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw them consumed by the fires of pain and sorrow, yet knowing not where to seek the still waters of Samādhi,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw them living in an evil time, subjected to tyrannous kings and suffering many ills, yet heedlessly following after pleasure,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw them living in a time of wars, killing and wounding one another: and knew that for the riotous hatred that had flourished in their hearts they were doomed to pay an endless retribution,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because many born at the time of His incarnation had heard Him preach the Holy Law, yet could not receive it,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because some had great riches that they could not bear to give away,

For this He was moved to pity.

Because He saw the men of the world ploughing their fields, sowing the seed, trafficking, huckstering, buying and selling: and at the end winning nothing but bitterness,
For this He was moved to pity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE FORMS OF CHINESE POETRY

THERE is no word for poetry in Chinese. The word *shih*, which is commonly translated "poetry," has a much narrower meaning. The Chinese distinguish two kinds of poetry: (1) verse which is meant to be sung and is associated with a definite tune; (2) verse which is meant to be recited. In recitation the reader follows his own fancy, aiming only at bringing out the musical quality of the verse. In declaiming verse, either for his own pleasure or for that of others, a Chinese will always intone rather than merely speak it.

The Odes of Confucius are songs. They were meant to be sung to definite tunes, which, unfortunately, have not survived. In those early days *shih* (the name by which the Confucian Odes were known) meant a song to be accompanied by flute or strings; an unaccompanied song was called *ko*. Pure poetry, existing independently from music, began with the *fu*, and was confined to this form till about A.D. 150.[1] Meanwhile, in 150 B.C. the Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty founded the Yo Fu or Music School. It was the duty of this

[1] A few poems in the five-character metre have been attributed to an earlier date, but their authenticity is doubtful, and it is quite clear that this metre did not become general as a literary form till the end of the Han dynasty.

department to collect the tunes and words of songs current in different parts of China. The words of such songs were called *Yo Fu Shih.* Word-rhythm and tune-rhythm were at this period still almost identical. The main types of metre were as follows :—

(1) Four syllables to the line.

Derived from slow four time without rests. Such lines when recited (not sung) tend to appproximate to five-four time, with a rest in the fifth place of each bar.

(2) Five syllables to the line.

Probably derived from a bar of six time, with a rest in the last place of each bar. This seems to have been the metre of popular ballads before the T'ang dynasty.

(3) Seven syllables to the line.

Derived from common time (eight quavers) with a rest in the last place. This was the typical metre of T'ang dynasty popular ballads.

During the Han dynasty, and particularly towards its close, the three metres derived from these three types of tune gradually detached themselves from music and became literary forms. A fourth metre derived from a combination of types (2) and (3) was, however, almost exclusively associated with song. During the second and third centuries the *fu* began to be regarded as an esoteric form, differing from poetry proper in two ways : (1) because it used " empty words," i.e. exclamations, conjunctions, prepositions,[1] and the like, which did not

[1] The use of such words was much more common in the south than in the north. See *Yen Shih Chia Hsün*, ch. xvii, and above, p. 15.

carry a full metrical beat; (2) because it used lines of unequal length.

During the Han dynasty poems of almost every kind, lyric, reflective, narrative and descriptive had been written in the *fu* metre. But from the second century A.D. onwards the new, regular metres usurped most of its functions. It was as a kind of descriptive ode that the *fu* survived, an impersonal word-painting of some single object or circumstance. Hence the popular but quite unhistoric derivation of *fu* from a word *fu* meaning to describe.[1]

Development of the three regular Metres.

(1) The four-syllable metre.

During the second and third centuries A.D. it flourished side by side with the other two. In the fourth century it was still used quite naturally and spontaneously (for example, by T'ao Ch'ien). But after that time it survived chiefly as the metre of hymns and prophecies, or of such secular compositions as aimed at a hierophantic effect. It is into this metre that Christian hymns have been most commonly translated.

(2) The five-syllable and seven-syllable metres.

Chinese prosody divides all syllables into two classes: (*a*) the Even, in which the voice remains at the same pitch during the whole enunciation of the syllable; (*b*) the Uneven, in the enunciation of which the voice rises or falls. During the fifth century the Chinese

[1] *Fu* was probably a word belonging to the language of the people of Ch'u. It has no ideogram of its own and is written with that of a like-sounding word *fu*, " to collect taxes," " levy troops," etc.

became increasingly conscious of this difference, and began to exploit it in their poetry. Thus metres were gradually evolved which depended upon an elaborate pattern of Even and Uneven tones. I have attempted to describe this evolution in my "Notes on Chinese Prosody," [1] and in the introduction to *170 Chinese Poems*. It culminated in the eighth century in the works of such poets as Li Po and Tu Fu.

In all these "new poems" the lines were of the same length throughout. At the close of the T'ang dynasty an even more intricate style of poetry arose, in which a pattern of long and short lines was superadded to the already complicated pattern of even and uneven tones.

T'ien Tz'ŭ or Filled-out Verse.

I have said that in early Chinese song the rhythm of the words was identical with that of the music, each note of the tune corresponding to a syllable in the verse. This, according to Mr. Chang Ping-lin,[2] is still true of southern Chinese folk-song.

In A.D. 317 the centre of civilization shifted from Honan to the Lower Yang-tze, a district colonized by the Chinese at a comparatively late period. The capital of the eastern Chin dynasty (A.D. 317–420) was at Nanking. This city had belonged successively to the non-Chinese kingdoms of Wu and Yüeh. The people of this region have always regarded themselves as absolutely distinct from the inhabitants of central and northern China, who seem to them solemn, slow-witted

[1] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, April, 1918, pp. 249–61.
[2] *Chang Shih Ts'ung-shu*, i, 110.

and clumsy. The country of Wu was famous for its songs and dances. It seems that the rhythm of the tunes was much freer than that of traditional, central-Chinese folk-song, and it was customary to fill out the words by the insertion of meaningless exclamations, such as *lilo*, *uya*, *oho*.[1]

In the fifth and sixth centuries a large part of China was under Tartar domination; moreover, Buddhism had brought about a close contact with India and Central Asia. From the moment when the Chinese became familiar with foreign music, their own seems to have decayed.[2]

At the end of the sixth century the song-books compiled by the School of Music contained a large proportion of foreign tunes, from Kashgar, Kucha, Sogdiana, India and the Turkic Liao kingdom on the eastern edge of the Gobi Desert. The words of these foreign songs were in most cases not translated; Chinese poets wrote their own verses in what was ascertained to be the theme of the original. To fit such verses to the foreign tune required the insertion of many "fa-la-las," the repetition or elongation of many syllables.

In the T'ang dynasty, of the ten classes of music which were studied at the Music School eight were non-Chinese, so that the divorce of word-rhythm from song-

[1] It is possible that before their conquest by the Chinese, the people of Wu may also have possessed song-words which fitted note by note to their music and that when they adopted Chinese as their language, they found themselves obliged (when the new words did not fit the old tunes) to fill out their lines with these *san-shēng* ("stray sounds").

[2] We are told that the Han Emperor Ling Ti (A.D. 168–89) "preferred the foreign harp, flute and dances, which consequently became fashionable among the upper classes at Lo-yang."

rhythm became almost complete. It seems to have been in the eighth century that it first occurred to poets that new verse-metres might be made out of the rhythms of the songs which were current. Two experiments in this direction are doubtfully attributed to Li Po; one or two were made by Po Chü-i and other poets in the ninth century. Such poems were called *T'ien-tz'ŭ* or "filled-out verses."[1] It is possible that this kind of poetry originated in the monasteries, for among the manuscripts brought back by Sir Aurel Stein from the Cave of the Thousand Buddhas there are several religious ballads written in the *t'ien-tz'ŭ* form. One is a *Life of Buddha*; its date would seem to be about A.D. 800. The following passage, which I will quote in the original, describes Shākyamuni's ordeal in the mountains:

Ku kao shan,
Wan jēn hsüeh ling pu ts'ēng hsiao,
Han to shu ts'ao pu ch'ēng t'iao,
T'ai-tzŭ lo hsiao-yao. . . .
Ch'ien nien ch'iu hsüeh tsai ch'i-ku,
Yu ping to;
Ts'ao mu ling tsēng kua ch'i-lo;
Shih pi ch'ien ts'o-o.
Hsüeh ling nan mien hsün
T'ai-tzŭ tso pan-t'o.

[1] That is to say, instead of taking verses in the standard Chinese metres and fitting them to song-tunes by insertion of meaningless syllables, repetition, etc., verses were now written in which each syllable of poetry corresponded to a note in the tune. Such verses were naturally constructed in repeated strophes corresponding to the repetitions of the tune.

[Lonely high mountain,
Ten thousand cubits snow crest; not once melt.
Cold much, trees and shrubs not grow branches.
Prince for pleasure wanders there.
Hundred seasons old snow lies on valley-ravine,
Moreover ice much.
Grasses and trees piled in tiers hang gauze festoons;
Stone-walls precipitous and irregular.
Snow crest south face abyss
Prince sits huddled.]

The song continues:

The Six Robbers [the six senses] *he changes into the Six Pāramitās* [paths to virtue], *by spiritual practice and much austerity. He sees winged creatures sweep by him, demons* [yakshas] *in innumerable hosts.* At last a great mist rises and spreads across the shoulders of the hill. *Where is Buddha, where those veined cliffs?*
T'ai-tzŭ ch'u so-p'o.
The Prince has left this mortal world.

The same manuscript contains a ballad in ten stanzas on the transience of human life. Each stanza consists of eight lines. The first, third and fifth lines have seven syllables; the second, fourth and sixth, three syllables; the last line has five syllables. The following paraphrase of the first verse of this ballad gives a rough impression of its rhythm and character:

Look upon the life of man, how fast his hours slide by,
His seasons fly;
His days, like the swift top that seems asleep,
Their secret motions keep.

Whose wholesome youth and beauty, while he knows it not,
Already rot.
Who, while with magic wheel he holds the world in sway,
Doth still decay.

In the stanzas which follow, sages, patriarchs, warriors, and courtesans are put in mind of their mortality. Yet the Scriptures teach us of another land, telling us that it is of fairer aspect than this earth—Sukhāvatī, the Blessed Land of Amida.

Then soon, then now set out upon your way,
Make no delay,
But thither quickly go,
Where (doubt it not, for it is surely so)
Naught shall decay.

It was in the tenth century that the *t'ien-tz'ŭ* became an accredited literary form. The man who raised it to this position was Li Hou-chu,[1] last Emperor of the Southern T'ang dynasty, deposed by the Sungs three years before his early death. Many of his *tz'ŭ* were written after his deposition, when he was wandering forlornly through his former empire, "High Heaven fallen among mortal men." This is one of his poems:

Immeasurable pain!
My dreaming soul last night was king again.
As in past days
I wandered through the Palace of Delight,
And in my dream
Down grassy garden-ways
Glided my chariot, smoother than a summer stream;

[1] *Giles's Biographical Dictionary*, No. 1236.

There was moonlight,
The trees were blossoming,
And a faint wind softened the air of night,
For it was spring.

The *t'ien-tzŭ* best known to European readers are those of the Sung poetess Li I-an,[1] translated by Judith Gautier in the second edition of her *Livre de Jade.* Many of the pieces in that book are either entirely original compositions, or are only remotely connected with Chinese poems. But these particular translations reproduce fairly accurately the content and atmosphere of Li I-an's *tz'ŭ.*

In ancient China the highest praise that could be given to music was to call it "lugubrious," to say that it "tore the heart-strings," that it "moved the listener to rheum and tears." It is not surprising that the *tz'ŭ*, so intimately connected with music, should have been concerned chiefly with the pathetic. Guttering candles, sinking ashes, wilting flowers, vanished youth, solitude, dereliction—such are its constant themes. It is in fact the most abstract poetry that exists; for the subject-matter is so unvarying that it ceases to occupy the mind at all. The *tz'ŭ* is a pure music of words, woven on a background of conventional sentimentality. The language used is very simple and has in it much of the colloquial. The rhymes, unlike those of other Sung poetry, were determined by current pronunciation, not by archæological considerations. The tone-pattern,

[1] A.D. 1082–1140. Also known as Li Ch'ing-chao. A lady of varied accomplishments; in 1132 she wrote the preface to a well-known archæological work, the *Chin Shih Lu* ("List of Works in Metal and Stone").

though elaborate, was less exacting than that of "new poems" in the regular metres.

Out of the *t'ien-tz'ŭ* developed the dramatic lyrics called *ch'ü*, upon which were founded the stage-plays of the fourteenth century. This is not the place to embark upon a discussion of the Chinese theatre, and I must reserve the *ch'ü* for another occasion. But it is perhaps worth while to point out that the drama of the fourteenth century is known to us only [1] in an anthology (the *Hundred Plays of the Mongol Dynasty*), compiled in 1616. If this anthology is as unrepresentative as are the T'ang poetry collections compiled at the same period, there may well have existed a Chinese Æschylus of whom we know nothing.

[1] We know the titles of about 600 plays, but apart from the 100 plays of the Anthology, only 16 complete texts are known to survive. Père Wieger's "Il nous reste des Yüan 549 libretti" (*La Chine à travers les Ages*, p. 245) is incorrect.

APPENDIX II

TEXTS

(For references, see Contents, p. 5)

(1) The *Elegies of Ch'u* were, as I have already said, edited by Wang I in the second century A.D. There have since been countless annotated editions.

(2) Most of the other early *fu* which we possess are preserved in two anthologies:

(*a*) The *Wēn Hsüan*, an anthology of literature made by Prince Chao-ming *circa* A.D. 520. Far too much space is given to mediocre writers of the fourth and fifth centuries. As long ago as the eleventh century Su Tung-p'o complained of the wretchedly low standard of literary taste exhibited by the *Wēn Hsüan*. It is a disaster that the compilation of the sole surviving early anthology should have fallen to the lot of this amiable but incompetent aristocrat.

(*b*) Several anthologies of literature were made during the T'ang dynasty. The only one which survives in its entirety is the *Ku Wēn Yüan*, which managed to extract from encyclopedias, histories, etc., some pieces omitted by the *Wēn Hsüan*. But of the early *fu* literature a considerable part was already irretrievably lost.

(3) The *Yü-ting Li-tai Fu Hui*, or "Complete Collection

of the *fu* of all ages, compiled by imperial command," was published in 1706 by order of the Emperor K'ang Hsi. It includes all the *fu* which are translated in this book. Texts, often very faulty ones, are reproduced without emendation or comment. Some indication of those passages which the editors themselves considered to be corrupt would have been very welcome. But the Chinese habit of presenting traditional texts intact is far preferable to the European custom of foisting doctored classics upon the public, without any indication of what has been emended.

(4) The *Yo Fu Shih Chi* or " Words of tunes played in the Academy of Music," by Kuo Mao-ch'ien of the Sung dynasty, in 100 vols. The three pieces taken from this collection will be found in most anthologies of pre-T'ang poetry.

(5) The 1905 Kyōto reprint of the Ming dynasty Buddhist Canon or *Tripitaka*.

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